

**THE CONSORTIUM  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF THE  
SOCIAL SCIENCES**

THE PROCESS OF  
BUILDING  
AN INSTITUTION

ANNE K. BERNARD



July 1993

# **The Consortium Graduate School of the Social Sciences**

The Process  
of  
Building an Institution

by  
Anne K. Bernard

---

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE  
Ottawa • Cairo • Dakar • Johannesburg • Montevideo • Nairobi • New Delhi • Singapore

Material contained in this report is produced as submitted and has not been subjected to peer review or editing by IDRC Public Information Program staff. Unless otherwise stated, copyright for material in this report is held by the authors. Mention of a proprietary name does not constitute endorsement of the product and is given only for information.

ISBN 0-88936-639-X



Printed on recycled paper

## Acknowledgements

A number of people gave considerable attention, time and care in facilitating the data collection and initial analysis of this case study. I wish particularly to thank the staff and students of the CGS. Important support was also given by senior administrative officers of UWI and ISER, and by officers in IDRC familiar with the history of the CGS.

Interviews were given by:

N. Girvan, Director CGS

E. LeFranc, Deputy Director CGS

D. Robotham, Associate CGS faculty

D. Gordon, Associate CGS faculty

9 current MSc students

2 MSC graduates

E. Greene, Director ISER

A. Chambers, Head Documentary Centre

A. McIntyre, Vice-Chancellor, UWI

R. Augier, Pro-Vice Chancellor, UWI

G. Lalor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, UWI

Mr. Wilson, Bursar, UWI

G. Bourrier, IDRC

C. Smart, IDRC

Funding for this study was provided by IDRC, through the Fellowships and Training Division. All responsibility for its content, however, rests with the author.

*Anne K. Bernard*  
*March 1992*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
1. INTRODUCTION	
Consortium Graduate School: Static Description	1
Consortium Graduate School: Evolving Institution	2
2. INSTITUTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Introduction	4
Institutional Development as Change	4
The Meaning of Institution	5
Implications for Institutional Development	8
Institutional Development as Learning and the Donor's Role	11
3. ORIGINS OF THE CGS: GOALS AND OWNERSHIP	
Introduction	13
Ownership	14
Goals	15
Goals and Ownership	16
Goals as Moving Targets	17
Goals in Context	21
The Multidisciplinary Goal	24
Donors, Goals and Ownership	25
4. THE CGS IN ITS INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT	
Introduction	28
Environmental Context of the CGS	29
Mona: the Most Proximate Environment	31
An Interactive Relationship	34
Implications for Donors	38

## **5. INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Introduction	41
Structure and Function	41
Leadership	43
Students	45
Programme	47

## **6. INSTITUTION BUILDING AND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Introduction	49
Organizational Learning	50
Donor Role	52

## **7. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE**

Problems of Measurement	54
Measurement of Goals Attained	56
Institutionalization	59

## **8. LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The CGS as Model	61
Potential for Institutionalization	62
Future Prospects	63
Donors' Role	64

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

66

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

71

## CHAPTER 1

### THE SETTING

#### The Consortium Graduate School: A Static Description

The Consortium Graduate School of Social Sciences (CGS) opened its doors to students in 1985/6, the culmination of five years of consultation and negotiation across the Caribbean on the status and future of the social sciences as a field of study, research and application in the region. It is a semi-autonomous graduate studies institution within the University of the West Indies, through which its degrees are granted. Funding, however, is through donors, most notably UNDP-UNESCO, IDRC, Ford Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation. Although situated on the Mona (Jamaica) campus of UWI, the CGS has an outreach mandate to the other two UWI campuses, the non-campus OECS countries and Guyana. Consideration is currently being given to extending linkages to universities of several other countries in the region, including those of Suriname (initially a member of the Consortium but withdrawn consequent to domestic political unrest), the Netherland Antilles, the Dominican Republic and one of the French protectorates.

The official reporting status of the CGS within UWI is somewhat complex, but not illogical. On matters of policy, procedures and curriculum content, the School answers to its Management Committee made up of vice-chancellors, relevant deans, board chairs and institute directors of the two organizing universities. It has chosen to grant UWI masters and doctoral degrees rather than developing its own certification, and so is subject to academic review by the UWI Faculty of Social Sciences on issues of admissions and thesis criteria, staff appointments and curriculum standards. For the same reason, its financial and contractual arrangements are handled by the UWI Bursar's Office. Because it serves all three UWI campuses, however, it comes administratively under the aegis of the University Centre and the Vice-Chancellor's Office. As a semi-autonomous unit within the university, the School is not unique in having to operate under such various organizational arrangements. Because it grants UWI degrees, however, the extent of its requisite conformity to the University is somewhat larger than the norm.

Until the 1990/1 academic year, the CGS offered MSc (one year), MPhil (two year) and PhD (three year) degrees in Social Sciences, with a concentration on economics, sociology and political science presented within a multidisciplinary development perspective combining coursework and research. As of the 1991/2 academic year, a revised programme will offer a 2-year MSc and 3-year PhD in Development Studies, with a more equal weighting of disciplinary and multidisciplinary courses but continuing the coursework-research structure.

As presently constituted, the faculty of the School comprises two core, six associate and two visiting staff members. This number is considered adequate for current annual enrolments (15-20), and the professional stature of the School is high. Only the two core staff (director and senior lecturer) are available on a full-time, project-paid basis, however; the rest remain on staff



in their respective university departments and are available to the School as schedules permit. The average per-year student intake, for all degree programmes, is 12. As of 1991, 34 MSc and 3 MPhil degrees have been awarded and two PhD's were in progress.

### The Consortium Graduate School: An Evolving Institution

The preceding description provides a factual picture of the CGS, but not a complete one. The reality of the School is more complicated in structure and function and less systematic in evolution due to the fact of its being an "institution" in the organic sense: a collectivity of individuals, acting more or less in concert, each with goals and capacities which must be negotiated and operationalized within complex socio-economic, cultural, academic and political environments. Thus, for example, while the School is *in* the UWI structure, it is not fully *of* it, either financially or as part of its institutional culture. While the CGS provides masters and doctoral programmes within the context of the university system, it remains very much a creature of the several donors which fund its core staff, supplement its associate faculty and provide its fellowships.

The CGS is in both purpose and design a major exercise in institutional development, one of particular significance in a region where graduate education generally is under stress. Unlike many donor-led institutional development projects, the CGS is not an extension of existing graduate provision nor does it have short-term or marginal HRD implications for students, staff or the academic community. Aimed at building capacity for the conduct and use of social science research, the CGS "experiment" involves a broadly-based and comprehensive institution *building* process. The aim is to create an education and research institution which will, in turn, generate knowledge (through research) and develop skills (through the degree programmes) at a senior professional level, for the academic and policy-making communities. It is an institutional development activity involving both high risk and high potential, requiring strong capacities and commitments on the part of its designers, managers, students and donors.

From initial conception in 1980 through to first intake of students in 1985 and up to the present, the School has been in a continuing state of instability and change, both organizationally and programmatically, as it has attempted to accommodate its philosophy and purposes within its several environments. These continuing accommodations, and the capabilities of its local professional staff to initiate, design and implement them, reflect perhaps the most important strength of the CGS as an institutional development (ID) activity: its capacity to learn; to incorporate feedback from clients and associates and to negotiate goal ideals with contextual realities in ways which maintain quality, consistency and relevance. That such accommodations continue to be necessary reflects as well the most enduring dilemma of the CGS as an ID activity: what should be the nature and extent of its final "institutionalization" within the region's academic and development communities.

Many of the changes in the CGS between initial plan and current application have involved core areas: venue, staff complement, curriculum emphasis and programme design. Most have been guided by the effort to ensure congruence among philosophy, organization and methods of

delivery: to maintain programmatic coherence and professional integrity while negotiating community acceptance; and to retain sufficient academic independence to pursue the essentials of the innovation while assuring sufficient membership in the university community to enable use of available resources and acceptance of its graduates.

The continuing attention given to improving CGS design and content is at least in part a function of the clarity of the Consortium's initial goals. Having as a framework well-articulated and sophisticated statements of professional purpose draws attention to mismatch with the environment and to the need to find viable accommodations. Institutions with a less clear sense of direction are less likely to have the motivation to assess or redress incongruence.

Any institutional development activity will face the same need for adaptive compromise between the ideal and the real. As collections of individuals, they are inherently complex, interactive phenomena, their development and management invariably ambiguous and equivocal, and determination of the appropriateness of any action more typically based on qualified and qualitative judgement than quantifiable certainty. Such judgements are more effectively applied, of course, when reference can be made to clear principles and purposes. If few institutions actually identify the need for compromise between ideals and resources, it is probably more a function of their failure to define those ideals in the first place than of their success at achieving them.

The fact that the CGS began with an explicit, conceptually coherent philosophical paradigm has been critical in enabling it to manage the change process constructively: to negotiate and make decisions concerning shortfalls in expected support, contradictory opinions, contending priorities and alternative approaches without losing its sense of the whole or its initial direction.

It is this perspective which guides much of the present case analysis. The next section will set the case study within the general theoretical framework of institutions as complex systems begun here. Subsequent sections will extend the description of the CGS as an example of institutional development, considering in more detail the philosophy and goals which have served as the base of its initiation and evolution; relations to the wider institutional and socio-cultural environment; and how both of these elements have shaped the emerging character of the School as a particular example of institution building. The role of the donor will be incorporated as part of the overall analysis, such interventions constituting a significant component of the CGS working environment, not only through the resources they provide but especially through the philosophy they apply to their relations with the School.

## CHAPTER 2

### INSTITUTIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Theoretical Framework

#### Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to analyze the experience of the CGS as a deliberate institution building response to the need to strengthen social science research and HRD capacity in the Caribbean. The intent is not to promote the CGS as a particular model of what such an institutional development activity should be. The term model implies a finished and perfected system of structures, functions and relationships; of goals, priorities and methods which "work" regardless of the setting or the members involved. But institutions and their development (whether spontaneous or facilitated) are never so static and never evolve without reference to the specific idiosyncracies of those factors. They are phenomena which exist in, in response to, and in terms of changing internal and external environments. As such, they can never constitute a completed model, except in history.

From a theoretical perspective, the concept of an institutional model fails to provide a useful guide to effective practice, since for each case, and irrespective of similarity in formal design or purpose, the unique blending of internal factors accommodated to an equally unique range of external conditions must somehow be taken into account. As with human development, there are common patterns, issues and trends which can help to analyze, promote and guide facilitative intervention, but such commonalities are useful only to the extent they make the individual case more visible.

Institutional development is best understood as a dynamic process of maturation. It involves searching not for the one right decision on design, curriculum or staffing procedure, but for the why and how of arriving at such procedures and assessing their impact for the particular case; for identifying the factors which created the need for various decisions in the first place and which continue to influence their direction.

#### Institutional Development As Change

(For change to occur) we need two things: imagination and perseverance. Without them, there will be no change for the better. (Zaragoza in Issyk-Kul Forum:18)

Innovation is not a linear, programmable process. It is more like structured output from chaotic behaviour... I believe uncertainty is the main driving force of human creativity. When you are pushed against the wall for inner or outer reasons, you must innovate. (Nilsson in Issyk-Kul Forum:117-8)

Institutional development is in essence a change process, whether it involves simply the revision, upgrading or extension of an existing structure and practice (institution strengthening), or the

actual creation of something new (institution building). The distinction between these two activities is a useful one since in practical terms each reflects differences in where the intervention must start and what it must incorporate in its terms of reference. These are differences which imply, in turn, differences in the complexity of the process, in human and financial resource requirements and in time and energy commitments. It is, however, a distinction of degree, along a continuum of socio-organizational change, rather than of kind. Both institutional strengthening and building involve the kinds of institutional development processes suggested by Eaton (1972:22)

... the planning, structuring and guidance of new or reconstituted organizations which (a) embody changes in values, functioning, physical and/or social technologies; and (b) establish, foster and protect new normative relationships and action patterns...

Both processes accomplish these changes by obtaining "support and complementarity in the environment", functions which in turn require alterations in attitudes and behaviour on the part of individuals, other institutions and often the wider systems with which the developing organization interacts.

As a process of change, institutional development constitutes a learning event in the broad sense. Anyone involved as agent, client or facilitator of the activity will engage, to a greater or lesser degree and more or less effectively, in the acquisition and manipulation of information, in the questioning of prior assumptions and procedures, in the evolution of new values, behaviours and expectations with respect to institutional arrangements and in the elaboration or addition of skills.

As suggested by the above quotations, and as learning theory makes clear, changes of this kind are invariably of indefinite but probably long-term duration, only moderately predictable and always iterative. They require the ability to analyze current conditions, to synthesize novel arrangements, to pursue the realization of those arrangements through conceptualization and implementation and to apply both tolerance and flexibility in the face of the continuing need to negotiate among goals, constraints and resources. From this perspective, and whether as strengthening or building, institutional development is not simply a matter of initiating or reforming structures. Nor is it an activity donors can easily support, given the implication of committing resources over an extended time period to a tenuous, untried and largely uncontrollable venture.

### The Meaning of Institution

In order to understand why institutional development can best be understood in human learning terms, and to assess how most effectively to support the process of developing a research and education institution such as the CGS, it is useful to consider the nature of the phenomenon: what constitutes an "institution" and what the processes are by which it comes into being and is maintained over time and changing circumstance.

In simple terms, the definition of an institution is relatively straightforward: an assembly of management structures and mechanisms, resource acquisition and utilization systems, staff roles and norms, a client/audience base and a product/function purpose. Complexity is added, however, by recognizing that this assembly is set within a particular set of socio-cultural, political and economic contexts. These contexts will constrain, facilitate and invariably redirect the institution's behaviour and evolution. They will themselves, of course, be influenced in turn by the institution's own eventual structure, functions and culture as a provider of goods, services and jobs and, to a greater or lesser extent, a determiner of societal values, job aspirations and market demands. It is within this framework that the concept of institution clearly moves away from simply an instrumental or "bricks and mortar" one, toward one which is essentially anthropomorphic, an expression of social commitment to cooperate and interact within an organizational culture, and involving such essentially human attributes as articulated and expressed principles of action, capacities for adaptation and skills in negotiating between means and ends.

According to Douglas (1986), an institution is the realization of collective purpose; a system of knowledge, analogies and rationales which can guide its members in relation to one another and to the wider society. Within this framework, questions of institutional development become obviously both more ambiguous and more interesting; and the concept of institution *per se*, as well as the analysis of its development, become more dynamic, complex and realistic, no longer amenable to being confined to narrow technological or "systems" terms.

Though Douglas' definition refers to more informal groupings such as the family, social ceremony and neighbourhood networks rather than to formal agencies, it seems not unreasonable to assume that institutions like the CGS have a similar type of psycho-social or perceptual dimension. Existing beyond, and underlying, the more readily identifiable dimensions of structure and function, the perceptual dimension may be particularly critical in cases such as the CGS where the purpose is not simply to produce qualified postgraduates, but also to promote and influence the region's view of itself, its approaches to development and its concept of graduate education. These are inherently social and perceptual purposes and presuppose an implementing agency which is itself reflective, interactive and able to evolve "shared analogies".

According to Douglas and others, naturally occurring or spontaneous groupings bound their members within specific categories of "rightness", certain knowledge constructs, attitudes and behaviours which members by definition accept as appropriate. Again, it is a characteristic reasonably applied to formal institutions as well and an institution like the CGS can be analysed in terms of the extent to which its staff and students adopt and adapt the knowledge and expectations of the group and whether the institution as such is confirmed or changed in the process. It is a conception of the institution not unlike that proposed by Argyris and Schon (1978:iv) as "... theories of action which are maintained and transformed by individuals who occupy roles within (its) structures and live in the behavioural worlds draped over those structures".



While perhaps "woven through" would be a more accurate image, the implications of this perspective for an institutional development activity such as the CGS are striking, especially inasmuch as the School has as a principal purpose the changing of mindsets about development, research and interdisciplinary paradigms. To the extent Douglas is correct in asserting that we "(cannot) possibly think of ourselves in society except by using the classifications established by our institutions" (1986:100), the importance and scope of the tasks being undertaken by the Consortium, as an institution, become particularly significant.

The relevance of Douglas' position to an institution like the CGS is clear, too, when considering the School's substantive aim of creating a new kind of social scientist, one able to evolve and use new development paradigms. This is by no means a simple task and the complexity of an institutional development process intended to achieve it is clear. While the CGS is engaged in an undertaking to break down the traditional disciplinary (i.e. institutional) blinkers of the Caribbean social sciences community, it is doing so specifically, and necessarily, by institutionalizing new ones and by institutionalizing itself as part of the academic system. It is important for those attempting to implement and support institutional development of this kind to recognize the difficulties inherent in trying to bring about such redefinitions from the inside, and to create new sustainable structures while urging a loosening or revision of current ones.

But while institutional development, even within the formal structure of a graduate school, is essentially a process of forming shared categories and social bonds, these are necessary conditions to institutional formation; they are not sufficient. A fully stable institutional form will develop only where the social group is legitimized through the establishment of a recognizable code of expression and behaviour. For Douglas (1986:46),

a convention... (which) arises when all parties have a common interest in there being a rule to ensure co-ordination, (where) none has a conflicting interest and none will deviate lest the desired co-ordination is lost.

Further to this agreement to agree, there needs to develop a "parallel cognitive convention" to provide the intellectual explanations as to why the institution ought to exist and must be maintained. It is through this last process of "naturalizing its social classifications" that the institution becomes stable enough to avoid entropy:

There needs to be an analogy by which the formal structure of a crucial set of social relations is formed (such that) it is not seen as a socially contrived arrangement (1986:40)

For Douglas, the institution's ability to establish common language (meaning) and action (norms) is directly related to its ability to "encode expectations... (and) put uncertainty under control". This will lead to behaviour becoming increasingly co-ordinated internally, and from there to "disorder and confusion disappearing" (:48). Irrespective of any legal or structural characteristics, the institution will become a viable, sustainable entity only once its members acknowledge themselves as sharing a set of purposes, values, expectations and behavioural

norms, i.e. an organizational culture:

... (a) small society in which people create for themselves shared meanings, symbols, rituals and cognitive schemes which allow them to create and maintain meaningful interactions among themselves and in relation to the world beyond. (1986:326)

Thus, both the creation of a new institution and the extension of an existing one involve convincing members and clients of its reasonable and non-threatening purpose, the appropriateness of its mechanisms and, despite some inevitable costs, the overall benefits of participating in, or collaborating with, it. In this context, institutional development becomes a matter not only of developing a feasible design and identifying adequate resources, but of winning the hearts and minds of those members and associates expected to make it work.

The issue of perceptions implied by Douglas' concept of the institution is immediately relevant to the case of the CGS; for it too, ascriptions of its value, risk-worthiness, relevance and legitimacy are largely matters of perception. If high calibre students and staff perceive the School as having value, they will participate and their participation will, in turn, help ensure that the assessment is warranted. If the hiring community perceives CGS graduates to be of good professional quality, it will hire them and thereby confirm the prestige of the School and the value of its programmes. For an educational institution in particular, it is important to establish justification for support not simply on the basis of the task done (i.e. graduating students), but on the deemed value of the enterprise. The School will succeed to the extent it encourages a shared conviction that it is not simply an arrangement of donors and a limited number of local elite, or a new arm of the University, but that it is an agency with a legitimate and merited "place" in the community.

### Implications for Institutional Development

As institutions are complex, so too is their development, and a number of perspectives can provide a more or less useful "way in" to assessing or planning an entity like the CGS. An instrumental, task-oriented analysis, within a micro/macro framework of how the institution influences its wider society (and vice-versa), suggests a functional, capacity-building definition of an institution as a *productive change agent*. Within this paradigm, institutional development is

the deliberate process of developing (new) institutions, or improving and expanding the existing ones, so they can induce stable changes in patterns of action and develop belief systems within a given society, ... (and enhance the) system of services (i.e. institutions) needed to support the development of broad social and economic sectors". (Gomez and Alvarez, 1990:4)

A *social process interpretation* of the growth of institutions, on the other hand, suggests an analysis concentrated not on the purpose or functioning of the institution in an instrumental

sense, but on its evolution as an individually rewarding and intellectually sustainable expression of a social bond, a bond which in turn reflects the cognitive and affective world around it:

... the entrenching of an institution (being) essentially an intellectual process as much as an economic or political one... To acquire legitimacy, every kind of institution needs a formula that founds its rightness in reason and in nature. (Douglas,1986:45)

Institution building in this conception is a rather more intangible, but nonetheless real, process of individuals collectively negotiating a new way of jointly naming the world and being, in turn, themselves renamed:

(It) is how the names get changed and how the people and things are rejigged to fit the new categories. First the people are tempted out of their (former) niches by new possibilities of exercising or evading control. Then they make new kinds of institutions and the institutions make labels and the labels make new kinds of people... (Douglas,1986:108)

While this is a description less immediately clear in the context of formal institutions than of more spontaneous natural groups, it nevertheless suggests a usefully different way of thinking about the core of any institutional arrangement and what it is trying to do. It implies that any institutional development exercise of long-term significance must necessarily involve a naming and renaming process; that forming the culture of the institution is as critical as supporting it with resources. It involves a process of breaking from current structures, paradigms or action patterns in order to formulate alternatives closer to new perceptions of what the needs of the institution and its environment are and how they can better be met.

Any analytical perspective provides, of course, only a partial understanding. In trying to understand the nature of an institution and the processes by which it creates and maintains viability, it makes sense to use as wide a range of analytical perspectives as possible. Without an understanding of how, and how effectively, an institution is functioning at the micro level, for example, conclusions reached through a macro analysis as to its "fit" with or contribution to the wider society will remain incomplete -- particularly in terms of why the effects are being realized or not. On the other hand, micro assessments of the immediate working circumstance of any particular institution, even if positive and useful to facilitating better functioning, will provide little guidance to broader decisions about which institutions need to be developed and how unless they are couched within a wider, more macro social framework.

Instrumental analyses of institutions are necessary; they may not, however, be sufficient given their emphasis on functional effectiveness and goal achievement factors. The specifically softer side of institutions, as voluntary groupings of like-minded and cooperating actors, is also necessary if we are to understand why apparently logical and well-supported bodies fail to realize their planned potential. Their problem may be that agreements on conventions and shared analogies were never achieved as assumed.

Broad and varied analyses of the institution and its development experience, will strengthen the potential of designers and donors to do a good job: to recognize salient factors and to incorporate these appropriately into planning and support strategies; to allow for the adequate distribution of resources; and to balance competing priorities. Different analytical perspectives admit the possibility of more sensitive questioning of, and differentiation among, the many elements of the institutional development process.

A simple illustration of the value of multi-focussed analytical frameworks concerns the distinction between building and strengthening. Again though probably more one of degree than of kind, the difference between these two purposes merits attention insofar as it can affect a range of support factors and strategies. A broad analysis should help determine whether the optimal strategy in the first instance is to build a new structure, to strengthen an existing one, or to evolve a hybrid. A macro-analysis perspective might ask whether the intention is to have the institution develop a totally new role and/or relationship with its clients and members and, if so, whether this requires, in turn, a fully new structure or at least a significantly altered existing one. On the other hand, the need may be met by helping to strengthen existing social relations and HRD provision. In this case, it may not be valid to take the risk and expense involved in creating a new programme.

A multi-focussed analysis should also produce a better sense of whether the activity can or should move from one type of institutional arrangement to another over the course of its evolution. The CGS provides a good example of this kind of shift insofar as preferences for all three arrangements find expression among participants and observers: for building a self-standing new institution; for becoming a different application of the normal UWI departmental structure; and for establishing a new centre for graduate programming in the region while remaining within the university structure. Since there is no a-priori "right" way among these choices, and since unguided organizational drift is likely to waste both resources and commitment, the greater the importance of assessments of feasibility, strategy and implications which are simultaneously as broadly and as finely discriminating as possible.

The amount and kind of resource and policy support for staff training, professional development and outreach activities with the client and user communities, will likely differ according to whether the aim is to create a new structure or to reinforce an existing one. The level of effort required of a donor or executing agency will vary according to whether the intention is: to define new operational and knowledge categories or to refine current ones; to generate alternative values or to clarify and better manage the application of those already held; to develop new management, staff and client relationships, priority-setting procedures and decision-making strategies or improve what exists. A narrow, one-dimensional analysis will tend invariably toward an equally narrow design because it necessarily follows a single line of questions. It will also tend toward single product outcomes, linearly and simply achieved according to pre-determined schedules and logical frames. Maturation, including that of institutions, is obviously not so singular a process and given the high risk and cost of institutional development, such an approach seems particularly inappropriate.

## Institutional Development as Learning and the Donor's Role

This brief reference to the value of a multi-layered analysis in understanding the institutional development process reflects the basic premise of the following analysis of the CGS: that the more comprehensive the perspective brought to bear on the iteration-adaptation process of institutional change, the more realistically that process can be revealed, understood and guided.

Institutional development is ultimately a process of change, of forming new or revised social bonds through the development of shared categories. It is, therefore, a process of learning, and the critical question then becomes whether it is something intervenors (donors) can, in fact, "do". It is certainly something they should well understand before getting into it. Is there, for example, an inherent contradiction in the idea of external intervention instigating a genuine evolution of social bonds? Such a process seems possible only where an intervenor defines its role not as resource provider but as change facilitator, making the *institutional* development initiative a *human resources* development one. How many donors are prepared or able to take on such a role? If institutional development concerns the provision of support to learning within an organization, strengthening the capacity of its members jointly to solve problems, generate knowledge and modify attitudes and behaviours, is this something that can be brought about simply through the provision of funds and the application of a project management plan?

The impact of outside intervention on institutional development is thus not a clear-cut one. Obviously, there is risk of undue cultural, intellectual and economic imposition where a donor wields overarching financial and technical control. To the extent established institutions tend to bound individuals within their conceptual and normative frames of reference, there is strong likelihood that the structures, methods and goals introduced by an intervention will persist even if at odds with the surrounding environment (the primary school, at least in design and putative function, looks remarkably the same whether in rural Nigeria, downtown Bangkok or suburban Toronto).

At the same time, any organic system tends toward steady state, toward continuity of practice and control of ambiguity. This suggests the potential value, if not the requisite, of external input expressly as a mechanism for provoking developmental change. A carefully designed and aimed intervention, like a carefully designed teaching strategy, can provide motivation for members (and potential new members) to call into doubt their traditional conventions and knowledge constructs, holding a mirror to the inconsistencies or weaknesses of current arrangements and presenting a means of developing logical alternatives.

Learning and innovation research suggests that even good ideas will fail where they are too far out of synchrony with their environment; where they confront the learner with a gap between present and new knowledge too wide to cross. Failure can also occur, however, where the gap is too narrow, where the new ideas are so close to the old that they simply reconfirm and reinforce rather than challenge. Interventions will be successful only to the extent that they provide middle-range, catalytic input. The intellectual and material support provided by a donor must sustain local initiative, risk taking and elaboration of expertise sufficiently long and



seriously enough for institutional change to evolve from within, but not so long or so much as to inhibit indigenous expression. Institutional development within this "learning" framework requires the donors' role to be one of providing the necessary margin or room to experiment, to fail and to adapt. Donor support can provide the security of resources, learning opportunities and professional exchange necessary to allow internally-generated initiative to be expressed and internally-sustainable stability to be achieved.

The implications for donors within this perspective are considerable. With reference to interventions in support of human resource development (HRD), of which institutional development is a form, Simpson and Sissons stress the importance of seeing the whole;

(that) it is not enough simply to build a school, pay for teachers or offer a fellowship... It involves relationship building as well as institution building and it requires long-term commitments (1989:7)

At the same time, the manner of donor involvement must be such as to promote local independence and integrity, deciding on the reliability and capacity of those involved and having the confidence and flexibility to let the agenda be set locally while continuing to provide appropriate support.

## CHAPTER 3

### ORIGINS OF THE CGS: Goals and Ownership

#### Introduction

When the existing structure no longer provides satisfying problem solutions for the collectivity, tensions and open conflicts result which promote the emergence of ideas for alternative structures and finally the appearance of political entrepreneurs who are willing to risk investment in new structural designs. In the end, it is the structural experiments of these political entrepreneurs (which) provide better problem solutions than the old ones for a sufficient number of powerful social actors (which) meet good chances for reproduction. However, only the institutional innovations that are legitimized by the ruling world view and that do not overstretch the cognitive capabilities of individuals can spread. (Kieser 1989: 544)

The way in which an institutional development process begins will influence how that process is eventually realized, how and by whom goals and methods are formulated and whether it is finally sustained. The more indigenously controlled its initiation, the greater is the likelihood that the institution's development will be coherent and stable. Kieser's description of the gradual evolution of medieval European craft guilds into early forms of formal productive organization supports this proposition. He chronicles an essentially natural and indigenous response to changing conditions, adjustment to newly emerging need and accommodation with tradition.

If not "tensions and conflicts", then certainly "professional concerns" about the deteriorating condition of Caribbean social sciences served to prompt the development of the CGS as an institutional solution. At the time of the 1980 consultation to set the CGS in motion, the social sciences were in a state of crisis, the capacity to continue creating and using indigenous expertise being lost. Since 1962, UWI had been producing a fairly good undergraduate base, but a base being eroded as graduates went elsewhere for further studies, returning with knowledge and skills often not relevant to Caribbean conditions and many not returning at all. Particularly in the case of the smaller OECS countries, but not solely there, the shortage of human resources with relevant expertise in socio-economic research, policy, planning and programme implementation was being blamed for the failure of many major development programmes to achieve their goals.

According to one of the CGS designers, "we were looking to the School for the type of person we had not been able to produce. The system was too compartmentalized to develop a strong hybrid person and we began to see the need for a multidisciplinary graduate". A critical factor in motivating their effort was the belief that the HRD potential was there, "that (we) were sitting on talent that could in fact be validated through local training", if the requisite infrastructure and resources were available. The Consortium was thus seen as a means of garnering those resources and convincing the Caribbean academic and hiring community that senior social science

professionals of the quality usually considered achievable only through northern universities could in fact be produced at home.

One of the most significant characteristics of the CGS has in fact been the extent to which its philosophy and goals have linked directly with the academic, socio-economic and HRD realities of the region. It is difficult to judge the inherent "correctness" of any institutional development design or programme decision; few such decisions are in and of themselves right or wrong. It is possible, however, to make an assessment on the basis of contextual fit, and within this perspective, the School's decisions could reasonably be judged correct in the context of its institutional and social environments. The CGS is set firmly within the development reality of the Caribbean, and its multi-sectoral and research emphases provide a strongly grounded frame of reference within which the curriculum has been designed and developed.

### Ownership

Key to the strength of the CGS and its synchrony with its environment, has been the degree of local "ownership" maintained from the beginning. Used here as it is applied in learning and adoption of innovation theory, ownership has little to do with proprietary control as such. Operational control is an ultimately necessary condition for sustainability and empowerment, but not a sufficient one. Fundamentally, ownership implies intellectual control over the concepts and rationale of the activity: understanding the meaning, mechanisms and implications of the innovation; having the skills to interact with and manipulate it to one's own best advantage and goals; and allowed the scope to apply such knowledge and skills to implement, assess and revise it. Ownership at this level is a matter of acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to implement the innovation; and of having the authority to direct the implementation process.

A common weakness of many intervention innovations, however, is their failure to facilitate or to allow the development of such ownership. Rather, recipients are expected to adopt the knowledge and behaviour of an innovation irrespective of their understanding of its cause or potential effect and typically without the right to change or adapt it.

The CGS proves a nice exception to the rule. Local ownership has been consistent from the outset, a function of indigenously-based conceptualization, motivation and management; high quality professional and administrative capacity in the region; and donors sufficiently knowledgeable about the capacities of the local managers to perform effectively to pursue a non-directive role. Although the first formal planning meeting was UNESCO-funded, its initiative and content were regional. The needs and priorities of the Social Sciences were identified by Caribbean scholars whether working in the region or abroad, with external funding providing only the venue for local professionals to come together to consolidate their ideas. Donors have continued to supply the financial resources, but in collaboration with content and management decisions taken by the CGS.

## Goals

The analysis of goals and their application is key to understanding institutional development. It provides insight into the magnitude and complexity of the task being undertaken; enables identification of possible inconsistencies between goals and design elements; helps establish where there may be conflicts between goals or varying interpretations of the same goal. Questioning institutional goals also provides the opportunity for members to articulate their own, individual understanding of the relative importance and preferred sequence of its different aims, giving an idea of how many "institutions" there actually are.

Goals here are not restricted to formally stated objectives, but include as well broader statements of philosophy, rationale and assumptions. They can thus provide further insight into the motivation for members' commitment and participation, and whether the institution is internally coherent. To the extent the philosophy underlying its goals are clear, an institution will have a durable core around which to make its choices and adapt or adjust its various programme components, in turn, reducing the risk of becoming scattered.

Goals can be critical indicators of an institution's developing strength if they are used as benchmarks against which it judges its own progress. The appropriateness of structures, content and mechanisms of the institution can only be assessed on the basis of desired ends e.g. whether the learning produced by particular teaching methods is that which was intended. In this context, of course, goals cannot be held sacrosanct or immutable. In considering the viability or value of strategies for achieving a specific end, it may well be the case that the goal itself is not viable or is of limited value.

While there is likely no absolute means of realizing complex institutional goals, the ability of the emerging institution to work with increasing accuracy toward this end will be both a reflection of, and a critical means of achieving, maturation. The continuing effort to test congruence and negotiate consistency between goals and methods, and to assess the inherent merit of each, will help ensure that goals are realistic and that the mechanisms required for achieving them are actually in place. The fact that an institution undertakes this kind of "organizational learning" in the first place is a significant indication of its strength, more so than the realization of any specific "products" per se.

It is an important perspective for donors to keep in mind. While products can, to a certain extent, be brought about from the outside through the infusion of sufficient and well-targeted resources, organizational learning can be realized only from within. Once again, the task for the donor in support of institutional development, becomes thus one not of supplying answers, but of helping to facilitate a questioning process.

Goals can never be understood in the abstract, but must be understood and assessed within the context of variously impinging environments. The reality for the CGS, for example, is a region of deteriorating economies and competing jurisdictional interests, coupled with heavy demands

for academic places and equally pressing demands for academic quality. A contextual analysis of goals helps to explain why the CGS appears to be succeeding despite this setting: through the gradual shifting of its goals over time, from comprehensive statements of disciplinary ideals toward more prosaic descriptions of structural and functional objectives; and through their continuing reinterpretation by the multiplicity of managers, clients and associates actively expressing their own definition of purposes and priorities.

The strength of the CGS is that its planners and implementors continue to have both a consistently clear understanding of the underlying ideals of the innovation and of the entry points and impediments existing in the environment. They also have the capacity and the room to manoeuvre in pursuit of those ideals as they, influenced by the contingencies of their environment, deem appropriate. In other words, because they have "owned" the innovation, they have been able to pursue meaningful organizational learning and so guide the inevitable shifting of goals in ways which have maintained internal coherence and consistency with initial principles. Thus, while the range of actors involved in negotiating the School's development process has been relatively large and varied, the quality and extent of local understanding of, and control over, the interpretation of goals has enabled the CGS effectively to integrate potentially contending expectations.

#### Goals and Ownership: the CGS Case

To understand the CGS as an institutional development process is in large measure to understand the evolution and application of its goals. Like policies, goals achieve meaning less in their initial expression as in their interpretation through practice. The success of the CGS is in a very real way a consequence of the well-articulated, coherent description of its purpose coupled with the gradual modification and specification of that purpose in response to the external conditions of its environment and through a reasonably conscious pattern of negotiation among implementors and clients.

Two related factors have contributed to this situation: the quality of the CGS leadership and the fact of local control. Most if not all of the designers and implementors of the CGS have been from the region, but all have received a major part of their education and work experience elsewhere. This combined background has provided a knowledge base, a personal and professional legitimacy with donors and peers and a sensitivity to local conditions which have, in turn, enabled staff to evolve and maintain an institutional direction and development strategy at once catalytic and conserving. External perspectives on socio-economic development theory, disciplinary paradigms and graduate programme provision have provided motivation -- have broken existing mindsets. At the same time, adherence to relevant traditional values and objectives has avoided the innovation's being rejected out of hand as interference. Local leadership has managed to blend internal and external perspectives so as to generate momentum for change while not alienating participation in ways which foreign executing managers could not have achieved.



While not revolutionary, the philosophical perspective underlying the CGS was reasonably provocative in the context of a traditional academic setting. Inasmuch as the region's social sciences were undergoing "a crisis of relevance", it was necessary that the field

... recapture the tradition of holistic analysis ... (and) to reinterpret holism to embrace modes of perception and issues which (had) hitherto been considered outside the boundaries of its concerns; (to move away from currently narrow and dysfunctional assumptions toward) a tradition of conceptual questioning and a willingness to engage in a certain amount of conceptual experimentation which (were) at the heart of the business of rethinking development. (Girvan 1989: 3,11)

It was an expression of programme goals with obvious merit. It was also, however, one which would likely not have been given equal credit had it come from an outside intervenor. In any application of learning and change, and therefore in the process of institutional development, the *perceived legitimacy* of the source of programme goals will inevitably be of greater consequence than the actual content of those goals.

On a somewhat more tangible level, the quality and breadth of professional leadership available locally to the CGS, and its ability to access resources and expertise both within and beyond the region, have made directive donor intervention unnecessary. Drawing from the experience of FLACSO, for example, the CGS adopted the concept of a multi-user (i.e. consortium) design. Reflecting the tendency of the Caribbean to swing between regional cooperation and national autonomy, however, the component of the FLACSO model which tied institutions into a single programme of work was declined. The wisdom of a looser, more flexible association was subsequently proven when Suriname withdrew (and now talks of re-entry); as Guyana's ability to participate other than by supplying students declined; and now with the potential of incorporating in the Consortium national universities from elsewhere in the region.

An even more immediate and explicit example of the Consortium's ability to build directly from and on local experience has been its relationship with ISER. This linkage has been realized on a number of levels: individual (the director and staff of ISER have formally had roles in the CGS evolution); institutional (there has been considerable contribution of space, materials and document management expertise from ISER to the School); and programmatic (collaboration in research, seminar and publication dissemination activities and networking have strengthened significantly CGS outreach to the wider community). Undoubtedly the professional relationship between the two institutions would have occurred regardless of the indigenous quality of the School's start; if nothing else, the two institutions share to a large extent the same donors. It is unlikely, however, that the quality and continuity of the relationship would have been as great had the initiatives and management of the CGS been externally controlled.

#### Goals: Naturally Moving Targets

As initially described, the idea of a "consortium" seemed as much conceptual as substantive.

Early documents suggested less a concrete structure than a complex association of, and interchange among, the activities and resources of the region's several academic and socio-political communities. Less a system of relationships as an end in itself, as a means of promoting continued coordination among disciplinary perspectives and between research and practice. Woven through these documents is a sometimes confusing blend of the goals themselves and the means to achieve them, making it not always clear what is expected to be the cause and what the effect of the innovation. Such circularity, however, is perhaps unavoidable given that most institution building involves a continuing interaction between objectives and mechanisms; between establishing an institute to promote the social sciences and establishing a social science capacity.

The first discussions of the purpose of the CGS provide a good sense of this complexity, including the difficulty of trying to disaggregate priorities and emphases among several programmatic and institutional (or systems) development objectives. They indicate, too, the very broad, comprehensive definition of institutional development which applies in the case of the CGS, in turn suggesting that any attempt to establish a generic typology or model of the institutional development process would necessarily prove a very difficult undertaking.

According to Smith (1988), the goals of the Consortium were cast from the beginning at two levels. The first aimed at theory innovation, generating alternative development paradigms which would combine social science perspectives within a new kind of "scholarship and research" and from there address the problems of the region in a more effective, creative way. The second level aimed, in a more typically instrumental way, at providing training which would produce better qualified graduates, and thus a broader human resource base for development activities *per se* (i.e. public officials responsible for policy and programme creation) and for sustaining and improving the development process (i.e. university teachers and researchers who would train future generations and create new knowledge).

Referring to the 1980 consultative meeting discussion, Smith describes the intention of the initiators that

... an expanded programme of social science training be undertaken, building upon the existing departmental and research institute structure but paying particular attention to a revised and strengthened masters degree curriculum, an enhanced programme of doctoral research within departments and institutes and stressing exchange of students and staff throughout the region. An experimental graduate school for the social sciences should be set up, comprising a consortium... especially for training at the PhD level... (its) programme should enhance the existing facilities for graduate training by focussing on interdisciplinary studies and by drawing upon the teaching and research resources in the social sciences within and outside the universities in the region... (The consortium would serve) the purpose of organizing instructors, arranging exchanges, securing and distributing training funds. Such a school should incorporate the existing strengths of the graduate programmes in the region, but provide a mechanism for coordinating and enhancing existing graduate programmes. (1988:2)

It was a vision of the Consortium built very clearly on the ideal of achieving a "best case" scenario. It sought to address weaknesses in the existing social science provision by strengthening that provision *and* to lay the foundation for extending the role and relevance of social sciences to the region's human resources and socio-economic development by creating an institutional base which would promote it through training and research.

At this point, though, the emphasis seemed not so much on creating an institutional entity as on coordinating a network. According to one participant, the idea was "to establish a mechanism for continuing dialogue among Caribbean scholars on a regular basis, whereby they could remain within their disciplines while collaborating under a common umbrella", and through this network, to generate that ideal "hybrid" development analyst.

While the image was not an unreasonable one, it was structurally at least fairly different from the current CGS. The shift should not be construed as necessarily a failure of goal realization. Rather, it equally reflects successful *goal negotiation*. Whether by chance or design, the Consortium's long 5-year germination period served it well in allowing the complexities and implied contradictions of these early goal statements and the diversity of actors necessary to perform this clarification process to be brought in. CGS goal statements over the decade have become increasingly clear and realistic, indicative of a growing institutional maturity, an awareness of what can actually be done in a situation of limited human and infrastructural resources. Because the original line of philosophical purpose has remained consistent throughout, however, most of what CGS staff now define as the core of the programme can be found in those initial statements of purpose regardless of shifts in format.

A related characteristic of CGS goals has been the *gradualism* of their application. Rather than trying to address all dimensions of its multiple goals, the School has tended toward particular components, principally *through prioritization and modification*. A third, somewhat less obvious, element involved in this focussing has been the *disentangling* of the more abstract and complex principles, rephrasing them as straightforward descriptions of practical application. Exemplary of the three forms of incrementalism, priority has been given: to building new physical and programme structures for the School, with fairly little attention to strengthening the wider university system; to establishing the full masters programme, leaving the doctoral studies still a modest component; and to balancing disciplinary with multidisciplinary courses rather than making a full commitment to the latter.

Prioritization and modification concern essentially the same issue: a gradualistic approach to goal implementation. Prioritizing enables concentration of resources on one element to the point of critical mass, with attention to the rest increasing as additional resources become available and as the lessons learned from the first are systematically applied in later stages. Modification involves the definition and realization of any one goal rather than the relation between competing goals. Its emphasis is on fostering quality rather than quantity in pursuing an incremental development. To provide a fully multidisciplinary programme of high academic standard, for example, would have required considerable effort and time in developing the theoretical

framework, materials and staff expertise.

Directly related to these first two strategies, the process of disentangling or disaggregating ends and means and of breaking down abstract or complex goal statements into more pragmatic constituents helps to determine where and how priority and modification can and should occur. Disaggregation is a way of facilitating the development of common goal interpretations among the institution's members. Thus, for example, another description of the aims of the Consortium puts into explicit terms the more philosophical statement of purpose quoted earlier. Here, the goals or benefits expected from the CGS are to include

... training at a relatively high standard (of) personnel capable of responding to the manpower needs of the governments, private sector and university;... a focus on multidisciplinary and policy studies and the establishment of linkages in training and research between the Consortium and government and non-government agencies;... a medium in which there will be a concentration of skills areas of research to which national scholars and policy-makers will have access on an on-going basis;... (a reduced) cost of training highly skilled academics and researchers, planners and project officers capable of thinking through and implementing the various tasks associated with issues of development. (Proposals, 1982: v)

Even here, questions can be asked of precisely how any of these goals will be achieved and of whether the CGS is in the best place to pursue them all (should ISER be the "research medium" rather than the CGS, for example). That said, the ideas expressed here as to where and how the School should be moving are much clearer and more accessible to decision-making and resource allocation than the earlier statement. As such, the statement can be seen as an indication of institutional development or maturation, even though in 1982 the Consortium was still at the level of "discussion". The point is not that initial philosophy should be abandoned for the sake of pragmatism; it is philosophy which provides the enterprise its underlying, catalytic spirit. The point is rather that eventually, and sooner than later, such motivational goals must be interpreted in operational terms in order that institutionalization occur. It is in this respect that the CGS is making evident progress.

A final comment on the issue of goal shift concerns the several levels and types of key players, both inside and outside the CGS, who play a major role in defining and operationalizing them: students, staff, the hiring and research-user communities, the general academic and professional community and donors. Overall, these various groups have evolved a reasonably good agreement as to the preferred direction and emphasis of the CGS purposes as these have become clarified. Why such symmetry has been possible will be discussed in a later section. In general, however, it seems to be a function of the continued attention given to ensuring effective two-way communication in the School, between students and faculty, between associate staff and management, and to some extent between management and donors. Such symmetry is a key to the Consortium's strength, indicating that the main implementing groups are pulling in generally the same direction, toward a purpose the definition of which they publicly share.

For most of these perspectives, the first priority continues to be the creation and strengthening of human resources: the education of professionally solid masters and doctoral students in multidisciplinary analytical skills and development-related knowledge and theory. Even IDRC's position seems a modification of its usually explicit emphasis on the training of researchers on research issues, toward one of raising the general quality of development analysis through graduates who may or may not engage in the conduct of research (although most are likely to pursue careers where they will use its products): "of instilling confidence in a generation of Caribbean students to face up to their reality and work for solutions" (IDRC note to file 1988).

Whether by intention or not, it is interesting to note that in this particular case of institutional development the usual IDRC criterion of research-related conditionality has not been applied, at least explicitly. While research is an integral part of the CGS curriculum, it is not the major part. Nor is it required that Centre-supported students come from training institutions or research projects to which IDRC has made a commitment; that plans be made for graduates to move to such venues; or that the CGS *per se* become a base for the training of researchers associated with the Centre. The point highlights not a possible diminution of a donor's principles of support, but rather the idea that donors (and all others involved in institutional development) need to exercise flexibility in applying those principles, prepared to take a perhaps longer-term, more abstract or indirect perspective on their usual priorities in order to accommodate the inevitable negotiations required by the process.

### Goals in Context

The appropriateness of any one member's institutional goals, like the goals themselves, can ultimately be judged only in relative terms, in the degree to which they complement and/or extend what other members understand the goals to be. The process of institutional development is to a large extent one of individuals finding common accord on specific core issues: definitions, purposes and methods (Douglas' categories, analogies and norms). As such, an individual goal definition which may be theoretically "correct" but which constrains or precludes agreement cannot readily be considered "appropriate". From this viewpoint, for example, IDRC's application of broad academic goals for the CGS can be considered sound inasmuch as they are congruent with those expressed by CGS members and clients themselves. The strength of the School itself is similarly evidenced by the fact that the academic orientation finds general agreement across the institution; towards the goals of:

"producing a practitioner or academic who is aware of the range of disciplinary approaches which can be applied to a social phenomenon, but who has enough training in at least one to act effectively within it" (CGS director)

"pursuing a policy-related focus, with the kind of knowledge and techniques that will produce better administrators" (senior UWI officer)

"generating a new kind of social scientist with a broader perspective... graduates who can



function as policy analysts or teachers who are more effective in their disciplines because they have a wider view of development; to provide a critical mass of these people who can move the region away from its myopic vision of the Caribbean" (senior UWI academic)

A further example of common purpose is the evolving recognition that institutional development in the case of the CGS refers not simply to the creation of a graduate studies programme as a means of generating a particular kind of social scientist, but to the establishment of those programmes and to the ethos underlying them as a permanent feature of regional graduate education provision. It is in this sense that the CGS represents an "institutional development activity" in the fullest sense of the term, implying a breadth of strategies and resource requirements for which broad community, "environmental", agreement as to goals is critical.

A number of goal statements provide evidence of movement toward agreement that the School should aim not simply at producing a good MSc, but to do so in such a way as to constitute *per se* a centre of excellence with a broad programme mandate:

... (attracting) to the region the kind of scholars upon whose services the respective universities and territories can draw for various development programmes (Proposals, 1982:v)

... promoting a distinctly multidisciplinary framework of thought and analysis for application to research and policy discussion on Caribbean social realities... (and) enhancing the operation of existing inter-disciplinary programmes in the departments by providing avenues for seriously and systematically exploring, in a multidisciplinary framework, the theoretical preconceptions and analytical methods of the social sciences. (Project Summary Ph III: vii)

"developing a new 'culture' of graduate faculty research wherein staff particularly undertake collaborative projects to include students and cross-disciplinary input" (CGS faculty member)

... taking into account the needs of the region as a whole (including) paying attention to the needs of the non-campus territories. (UNESCO-UNDP expectations in Smith 1988:21)

One obvious implication of such statements is that the Consortium should serve not simply to "fill the gaps" in the regular system, but should play a proactive and constructive function within the region's social sciences and development communities overall: broadening the definition of what the graduate system is; introducing an alternative analytical dimension to the concept of social sciences as a tool for development; extending the geographic scope of UWI/UG contact and provision to the wider Caribbean as well as internationally; and providing a different pedagogical framework for the design and delivery of graduate programmes.

Given these aims, it is clear that the CGS is an example of institution *building*, not simply strengthening. This conclusion is reinforced by the strategies of institutional development which have been pursued and the resources which have been provided over the past decade. No data were found, for example, to suggest that serious consideration was given to any other than beginning a new organization. To strengthen one or more of the existing social science departments of the participating universities was not a viable option; it would have been politically untenable to select one from among the contenders, and financially untenable to support more than a few to a degree sufficient to achieve sustainable results. Further, it would have been difficult to incorporate an innovative programme such as the multidisciplinary full-time research masters into an existing system given the inclination toward traditional patterns. There was little to indicate members of other departments shared the CGS designers' dissatisfaction with traditional conditions.

The importance of context in understanding and guiding the goal formulation process of institutional development becomes clearer if one acknowledges the activity as an essentially *organic* one, continually in a state of change and integrally linked into a social-cultural base similarly in transition. Thus, while the discussion of the nature and evolution of CGS goals suggests a reasonably positive trend overall toward increasing maturity, clarity and member agreement, specific questions concerning the institution's direction remain. Not surprisingly, chief among these has been the dilemma of whether and how to balance the dual concerns of establishing the Consortium itself as an institution, and of strengthening the capacity of the university as a whole to function as an intact education system.

It is here that the distinction between the programme and the institution of the CGS, the question of whether its basic aim is one of institution strengthening or institution building, becomes most relevant. Institutional strengthening of the system would, in this case, require a new focus on the improvement of what is already available in UWI, through additional staff training, infrastructural support and attention to the goals, methods and design definitions of that wider system. Institution building of the CGS would, on the other hand, require continuing attention only (or chiefly) to the CGS.

For the present, the balance continues toward building the School. But because this process has been happening chiefly through the prioritizing of goals rather than their elimination, ultimately those other "system-related" goals, still legitimate purposes of the overall activity, will need to be addressed. In fact, concern about increasing the quality of professional social science research and teaching in the university system generally remains currently an active one, and one intimately connected to the CGS itself. The long-term viability of the School depends directly on the capacity of the undergraduate system to produce good applicants, and the successful realization of its multidisciplinary perspective depends on there being elsewhere in the system a complementary discipline-based graduate provision of equally high quality.

The nature and possible future of the relationship between the CGS as a developing institute and the UWI as a system in need of strengthening will be discussed in more detail in a later section. This present discussion makes the point that the ways in which the goals of any knowledge-based

institution like the CGS continue to evolve, become prioritized, modified, disaggregated and interpreted within the context of an internal and external environment, will directly define the character and success of that institutional development process.

### The Multidisciplinary Goal

Based on the preceding discussion of its goals and philosophy, it is clear that the CGS is far from a straightforward institution building exercise. Part of the complexity stems from the fact that, in addition to providing graduate education, it is attempting to evolve a fully new social sciences paradigm through which socio-economic development can better be understood. At one level, it is perhaps not of particular importance what theoretical paradigm guides the content of a graduate studies programme as long as it is one accepted by the community as professionally sound social sciences. At another level, however, the interdisciplinary focus seems to be having considerable effect on how the School is evolving.

Most obvious is the extent to which the concept, as a rationale for the Consortium's programme, has captured the interest of development donors as they themselves come to see development problems in more holistic terms, as phenomena most effectively understood (through research) and addressed (through policy and programmes) cross-sectorally. It would likely have been more difficult to generate donor commitment to the Consortium had it pursued a traditional disciplinary focus, and this regardless of any aim to produce equivalent numbers and quality of graduates. The strategy of a separate institution would have been harder to justify in this circumstance, as would the decision to support the School as distinct from the wider system.

In the same way, the multidisciplinary focus has captured the interest of staff and students, several of whom indicated that a major factor in their decision to join or enroll in the CGS was the opportunity it provided to explore new approaches to their field. While students are somewhat less influenced by the theoretical framework *per se* than by the fellowship support for a full-time programme, and while they maintain primary commitment to their initial disciplines, most of those interviewed felt the effort to look across disciplines was a valuable and necessary component of the programme.

In a somewhat more indirect, though nonetheless important, way the continual questioning within the School as to the definition and application of its multidisciplinary focus is proving in itself useful to the development of the programme. By stimulating a continuing dialogue among staff and students about its theoretical meanings and its implications for the quality and relevance of the degrees, multidisciplinary as a hallmark of the CGS is providing a good basis for shared exchange and common understanding. Not only is this joint consideration leading to a substantively better programme in terms of coursework and research quality, it is also serving to maintain an unusually high degree of enthusiastic interest among staff and students in the quality and direction of the School's own development i.e. where it should be going as a graduate education institution and how. As suggested in the introduction, it is just such a continuing process of forming agreed-upon analogies and norms that is the heart of the natural

institutional development process. That a central concern of the CGS, too, continues to be the determination of such analogies and norms, in the form of its theory and philosophy of appropriate graduate education, is a good sign.

### Donors, Goals and Ownership

A final element in considering CGS development concerns the role of the donors in setting, negotiating and monitoring goals and facilitating ownership. With respect to defining and operationalizing the CGS purposes, donors continue to be responsive to, rather than to direct, the evolving maturity of the institution. As a case in point, documentary and interview data from IDRC suggest that it has come to accept the fact that institutional development is necessarily a gradual, iterative and largely uncontrollable (though not unguidable) process. The documents also suggest, however, that movement toward this acceptance has itself been gradual -- indicating that donors, too, must learn. Thus, while the first funding document showed an underlying confidence in the capacity of local leaders and the soundness of the enterprise generally, it was nonetheless fairly directive in tone and probably overly optimistic about what an institutional development project could aim to do:

... to establish a high level institution which would provide the social science cadre necessary to formulate, analyze and assess development objectives, planning and implementation;

... to undertake simultaneously the social science research needed for development...;

... to provide for in-training for the cadres in the public and private sector...;

... to produce an on-going data base for elaboration of planning in key sectors;

... to undertake as a priority project-oriented research in the area of the transfer of science and technology in close collaboration with natural scientists and government authorities. (PS Ph 1:5)

Training was to be "at the level compatible with research, be problem-oriented ... and be so arranged that students will be part of research teams, thereby combining funding for staff or scholarships with concrete developmental action-oriented research projects" (PS Ph 1:5). Finally, the School was to have a policy outreach function, encouraging closer cooperation between academic and development communities.

Clearly such an agenda was a heavy one for an institution which had yet to get off paper or garner a clientele. From IDRC's perspective, however, it was an agenda which explicitly reflected the conditionality criterion of marrying HRD support directly to the building of research capacity. It was also an agenda never actually realized within the time and resource frame provided, nor realistically could it have been. What is particularly interesting about

looking at this agenda now, from an institutional development perspective, is that it seems never to have been applied in the terms in which it was written. *In application*, IDRC's "CGS project" has been quite realistically non-directive, non-demanding and modest. While the objectives as listed might have been used indicatively as valid goals at which to aim, they have not been interpreted as fixed.

In retrospect, though the link of research to training remained important to IDRC, the need to adapt the ideal to the reality was also recognized. In this instance, a discrepancy between espoused goals and goals-as-applied appears to the good, toward strengthening the project by not encumbering it with non-attainable ends, allowing it instead to evolve in relation to externally-set benchmarks as well as its immediate environment.

This is the kind of hands-off approach not easy for donors to take, however, given their own institutional demands for clarity of means and ends, time-line schedules and completion dates. It is a role made more difficult in institution building (as opposed to strengthening) where by definition no track record or proven infrastructural capacities exist on which to justify or ground the exercise. That said, it is a necessary approach precisely *because* the aim is institution building. Specifics of what, where and how resources will be needed and the best development pattern will be difficult to predict or plan precisely.

The situation is complicated further in the case of a research training institution like the CGS where the type of knowledge base and intellectual skills sought are not directly "teachable", but are the result of establishing a broad learning base of theory, knowledge, attitudes and analytical skills -- and of acquiring practical experience in the field application of all of these. It is one thing to build an institutional base which will design a multi-week course in research methods, and direct students through it. It is quite another to establish such a base for "guiding" students through a two-year programme of sophisticated coursework and thesis research.

The point is not that one format of developing institutional research training capacity is inherently better than others; each serves a different end. Simpler programmes provide donors and managers some degree of control over the target audience, the learning product and eventual utilization. More complex ones like the CGS provide no such certainty. The first can be made relatively cost-efficient in terms of matching training programme with learner need. The second allows only for the provision of broadly-based learning opportunities, with learners themselves determining the manner of their engagement. Any learning acquired will be applied only indirectly and in the long-term.

A decision to pursue the latter type of institutional development must be made on the basis of quite different programmatic concerns and frame of reference than the first. For the CGS, it was made, not in terms of achieving specific social science research and training goals, but following a more general decision that support to open-ended, senior level learning in the social sciences was warranted, whether or not this led directly to enhanced research capacity (although assuming that at least some graduates would pursue such work). It implied for a donor little assurance of product; goal statements were necessarily ambiguous; direction over teaching inputs, client

selection and learning outcomes minimal; impact measures only marginally quantifiable (except for such relatively uninformative variables as graduate numbers); resource planning, allocation and scheduling neither clear nor constant; and timelines long and indefinite. Institutional development of this kind, and as exemplified by the CGS, is obviously not for all donors most of the time.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE CGS IN ITS INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

#### Introduction

Institutions are not islands. All exist within the context of numerous environments (social, political, economic, cultural) which define their character and determine their success. One way of visualizing these environments might be as series of concentric circles, each moving out from the institution according to its respective degree of interaction with it. In the case of a university or research centre, the position of these circles would depend on both (a) the extent to which the community or institutional context determined the character of its programme, its criteria for student selection and its research agenda; and (b) the impact of the university on the ability of those contexts to function as competitive education venues, as hirers of graduates or as users of research.

In this analogy, lines separating the circles need to be considered as somewhat variable in their solidity, becoming more or less vague (i.e. unimportant) as relationships intensify or diminish over time. The process of institutional development might be conceived as one of identifying the relevant environments, determining their relative position with respect to their influence or need to be influenced, and assessing how solid the lines of demarcation are and should be. A "developed" institution would be defined as one which had managed to stabilize an appropriate and sustainable set of encircling relationships, with each able to meet its needs and accomplish its ends with reasonable ease.

As an exercise in determining what the critical contexts of the developing institution are, diagramming the various collateral agents in this way has a certain logic and can provoke interestingly different or unexpected perceptions of relationships. The problem with the analogy, however, is that it is essentially static, ascribing to each circle a relatively fixed position with respect to one another and to the core institution. The result suggests a permanence in level and direction of interaction which is likely neither accurate nor particularly helpful as a guide to understanding and facilitating institutional development.

A perhaps pertinent variation on this analogy, however, might be a set of venn circles, each cutting into the developing institution to a degree reflecting the extent of reciprocal influence or mutual impact. As the institution matures, the size of each overlap would be changed in consequence of changes in the strength or importance of the relationship -- though unfortunately indicating nothing of the cause, effect or quality of that relationship.

Whatever the analogy used, it is critical to the eventual sustainability of a developing institution that it effectively recognize, analyze and manage its various and changing environmental relationships. Without accounting for whether and how the agendas and capacities of other agents impinge on its own, the institution will be less able to ensure the resources and cooperation it

needs, or its status as a legitimate entity within the community. Nor will it be as able, in turn, to help strengthen that community. This last point is particularly relevant for the CGS in the context of its university environment. There are clearly risks to that wider system inherent in such a major donor-supported institutional development initiative. The significance of these risks is in direct proportion to the fragility of that system, of course, and in the case of the CGS and UWI, the risks seem fairly high. They will become even higher the more successfully the CGS attracts resources, expertise and attention disproportionate to the rest.

### The Environmental Context of the CGS

Like much else about the CGS as an institutional development activity, the environments which influence its evolution are complex. The most pervasive of these is the region itself, a particularly unique combination of separate states intimately inter-related by virtue of shared colonial history; limited economic resources, flexibility and independence; and reliance on international support for human resource development. The result is a socio-political and cultural environment seemingly destined to a permanent process of negotiated balance: on the one hand, the push toward integration to provide economies of scale, cooperative use of resources and a stronger voice in the international forum; and, on the other, the pull away from absorption into a single Caribbean identity which might reduce national identity, independent action, cultural cohesion and social commitment to problem solving at the local level. A chronically deteriorating regional economy, coupled with social and political proximity to North America and persistent vestiges of a colonial heritage have most directly affected education in the Caribbean. Limited financial and staff resources and job potential have pushed students and graduates out to better opportunities in the West; availability of such opportunities within Western cultures reasonably well understood and still valued have continued to pull them away.

From the perspective of the Consortium in particular, the influence of this context has been evident in both its origins and conduct. It is clear that the critical state of socio-economic and human resource development conditions in the region motivated the clarity and persistence with which the philosophy and priorities of the Programme were formed. The goals of the School were not simply to serve an educational purpose, but also a developmental one, in terms of preparing a more development-conscious and skilled senior management and policy-making base and of encouraging a similarly more sensitive body of development researchers and research. This coherence of purpose, in addition to its inherent merit, has given the School a sense of direction which probably few graduate programmes have and has helped it maintain stability, attract good staff and students, and draw donor support.

A somewhat less explicit function of the School has been to promote a stronger sense of Caribbean self-confidence in its capacity to produce graduates academically equal to those trained in the North and surpassing them in locally relevant knowledge. Such a purpose implies more than simply the development of a professionally sound degree programmes, suggesting that the School's most significant referent in determining standards of learning should not be UWI, but universities in North America and Europe. This benchmark may not be an unreasonable one. The backdrop of colonialism has inclined Caribbean self-perception toward standards set outside



the region and it is in the North where many graduates will eventually be judged. The problem of brain-drain persists.

The reality of the Caribbean is that the North will continue to intrude, and the School must account for the need to produce graduates who are able to straddle the two intellectual and employment systems. The curriculum thus includes materials from both Northern and Caribbean perspectives; a small number of associate and visiting staff have come from outside the region; and the PhD programme includes at least one overseas stage. It is a realistic balance, without the isolationist blinkers sometimes attached to programmes aimed at establishing a strongly indigenous focus. It acknowledges the academic and career pressures facing students and the inescapable influence of the North in answering these. That almost all staff have foreign degrees, but have remained in the region as enthusiasts for local careers, adds a reasonable counterweight and suggests that the Programme's attempt to develop a strong regional base with international elements is viable.

On the more negative side, the reality of an economically weak regional environment has made the development of the Consortium more difficult to direct. The most visible consequence of this, from the perspective of some, has been the School's dependence on a university system which is also fragile. Funding has not been sufficient to enable the CGS to stand as a completely independent unit; nor would it have been appropriate for donors to support the initiation of a structure which could not have been sustained locally. But while placing the CGS within UWI has made sense developmentally, it has created funding problems for the School. Contributions from the university have been, and are likely to continue to be, modest and there have been signs of defensiveness (evidenced as charges of elitism) from the university community, perhaps recognizing the risk to its own programmes from a strong and competitive graduate research and training centre.

The dilemma, unfortunately, is not readily resolvable. The Ministry of Education, and by extension the university, appear on the whole sympathetic to the goals of the School, but like the region generally both are poor and "somewhat dispirited": material conditions are of low quality, student enrollments are high; faculty positions are frozen and salaries low; and there is little time or motivation for local research (Simmons et al, 1988:21). Like the region, too, there is in the university an inherent tension between a concern for local control and relevance at each of the national campuses, and the undeniable benefit which comes from the co-operative use of human and infrastructural resources as well as course provision. Comments of elitism aside, reluctance on the part of the university to accept or integrate the School as part of the system seems to be more a result of omission than commission, a failure to identify or initiate cooperative mechanisms rather than of any active attempt to impede the work. Thus, while graduates will be welcome to apply for staff positions at UWI, according to one Pro-Vice-Chancellor, "the university could of course make no commitment to a plan for incorporating them back in". It is an attitude reflecting probably less an opposition to the CGS than of attention to the university's ability to maintain its own stability.

Resources available to the university remain low and the viability of its infrastructure and

self-regenerating capacity weak. The CGS had intended incrementally to reduce its dependence on outside donors by drawing on UWI and/or UG resources through staff exchange, physical accommodation for the programme and students and fellowships. Conditions of the universities have made realization of this goal largely untenable. While there was some initial consideration given to a joint PhD programme between the CGS and the different Social Science faculties, lack of a full-time programme at that level on the campuses has put this strategy on hold.

Within the Consortium itself, the goal of mutual support has not been much better realized. Suriname has never participated due to political crisis; UG has been able to provide some visiting staff time, but on a very limited and sporadic basis and no direct support to the School's or the students' maintenance. Within UWI, the limited capacity of the three campuses to participate has restricted the School to operations at Mona where institutional infrastructure is strongest and where availability of collateral academic and research support is most concentrated.

### **Mona: The Most Proximate Environment**

The CGS is effectively a campus-specific institution, notwithstanding its regional student base. At this level, however, it is making reasonable progress in establishing itself as a part of Mona's academic environment. It is with respect to Mona that the CGS comes closest to realizing an effectively overlapping and interactive relationship. The relationship is a logical one. A campus venue provides opportunities for immediate, regular and iterative communication as to the thinking behind the innovation which a multi-campus activity would not. Such communication is the basis of the trust needed, in turn, to enable further cooperation and support. At the campus level, the Consortium is no longer simply a concept, but a tangible body of people, activities and resources.

Reasonably, level of support for the School varies directly with professional proximity to it in terms of knowledge of what it is trying to do and involvement in its activities. Murmurings of elitism are understandable among those who see the School making too little effort to explain itself or to reach out and market its ideas and purposes. That the School selects its associate staff rather than seeking applications may further be inhibiting more assertive support. While selection makes it easier to control for staff expertise, it also allows the School to remain more aloof from the community than would be the case if it had to elicit applications.

Support has come most explicitly from those associated with the School and its organizers from the beginning, people who know the innovation well and have made a professional commitment to it. The Vice-Chancellor, Bursar and Director of ISER are three of the most important of these, bringing to bear both the seniority of their positions and their own credibility within the university. Structurally, the CGS is intimately connected with all three: administratively situated in the University Centre, under the V-C; financially monitored by the Bursar; and physically housed in ISER with access to its documentary, research and network resources. Some level of association with particularly the first two of these was inevitable; the quality of the association,

however, was not and the School's ability to maintain reasonably good support is an important sign of its success. In institution building, where there is no track record on which to justify commitment, it is the quality and credibility of its support which will provide, in turn, credibility with donors, peer and user communities, and clients.

Of the three, the relationship with ISER is the closest and probably most important in substantive terms. As a research centre, ISER had an already established place and network in the Caribbean and internationally. It has thus provided the CGS an effective base on which to associate its own name, and through which its students can learn about, conduct and disseminate their research. Somewhat more subtly, ISER is also able to reinforce the School's goal of building professional confidence among students. The flow of well-respected academics and their work through the Institute is constant; through seminars, books and presentations the CGS has direct access to much of this. ISER's network and research activities constitute visible evidence that the CGS assumption of indigenous capacity has validity and serve as an impressive model to students of where their academic efforts might lead.

At another level of institutional "overlap", ISER's documentary resources have usefully extended CGS acquisitions, particularly in terms of scarce regional literature. As valuable as access to the materials themselves, however, is the documentalist expertise ISER provides. The head of the Centre and her staff have provided particular support in locating fugitive government and agency materials on students' behalf, and have taken initiative in facilitating book purchases in North America and Europe. The professional calibre of this work and the time given to it could not likely have been developed within the CGS during this initial period, even had sufficient funds been available.

Interaction with the Vice-Chancellor and Bursar is less intense and comprehensive than with ISER, but has been nonetheless significant. A negative attitude on the part of either would have meant to considerable weakening of institutionalization; their positive support has contributed importantly to promoting it. Recognition by these officers has been a necessary component to the political legitimacy of the School within Mona, as well as enabling its physical and administrative maintenance.

Relations of this kind with the wider bureaucracy constitute a key balance for an institutional innovation like the CGS. On the one hand, the School needs to maintain a sufficient distinctiveness from the system to sustain its image as a meaningful alternative to the normal educational provision, and thus an innovation meriting special attention, donor support and, to a degree, dispensation from adherence to regular institutional norms and expectations. On the other hand, it needs to ensure sufficient linkage with the system to establish itself as a sustainable and recognizable part of it. A significant advantage has, therefore, been gained by having in the Vice-Chancellor a person with sufficient knowledge of and commitment to the CGS to support its relative independence and promote it within the university and donor communities, while at the same time providing it the necessary institutional base.

Relations with the Bursars Office are somewhat less smooth. But the problem is perhaps more

one of frustrated expectations on the School's part than of exceptional constraint; time taken to approve budget allocations, accept curriculum changes or make staffing decisions is more likely to be perceived as "delay" when the waiting institution really seeks autonomy. In general, however, interactions seem effective and positive. Even from the School's point of view, decisions "have not directed us in any substantive way from what we would have done in any case".

Symmetry between the CGS and the university is in part a function of the fact that their administrative alliance makes sense. UWI's agreement that the CGS grant its degrees reasonably implies maintaining sufficient control over standards to protect its own integrity, an integrity which will be to the long-term advantage of the Consortium. In the more immediate term, affiliation with the university provides the CGS access to a level of reputation, administration and infrastructure which would have taken considerable time to put together itself. The Consortium's association with UWI has also given credibility and stability to the students' work, confirming their decision to enrol and reducing the risk of experimenting with an institutional innovation.

A further strength of the CGS-UWI association has been the university's previous experience with its other semi-autonomous units. Thus, while substantively the School may be an innovation, administratively within UWI it conforms to a generic type for which management structures and control systems are already established. Within this context, and drawing on a basic principle of learning, the success of the CGS as an institutional development innovation is directly related to the fact of its not being "innovative" at all levels.

Learning theory holds that it is rarely possible simultaneously to change all aspects of an accepted belief or action system, leaving nothing of previously reliable and effective expectations to serve as the base from which new ideas or behaviours might safely be tested. Rather, it stresses the importance of keeping the gap between the known and the new to a size which will provoke not self-protective adherence to old ways, but the creative and self-confident reconsideration of new ones. To the extent the CGS constitutes a recognizable institutional structure, the university community can apply not only proven administrative mechanisms in its relations with it, but also the more "cultural" responses typically applied in relations with member units i.e. tolerance of ambiguity, suspended judgement and willingness to consider new ideas and operational flexibility. If the new structure is such that at least some of the current standards can be applied, attention can then be given to accommodating those aspects of the innovation which are new.

Repeating an earlier point, an institution is never fixed and critical to its survival is a continuing negotiation between its purpose as an innovation and its need to become incorporated into the status quo. A pertinent example of this process has been the School's development of the new 2-year MSc programme, a fairly major restructuring of the previous two-tier programme of first-year theory (MSc coursework) and second-year practice (thesis MPhil). Programmatically, the second-year degree included the MSc option as a consolation degree for those electing to leave the programme early (motivated typically by the pull of the job market). According to both

School staff and several leavers, the one year programme was professionally unsatisfactory, lacking an inherent closure. From a personal perspective, the situation was also unsatisfactory, both staff and students reporting a certain tension in the experiment being "let down" by failure to complete the cycle.

From the School's perspective, a fixed two-year programme (i.e. without the MSc, but with somewhat relaxed thesis requirements) makes substantive sense. From the university's perspective, the apparent diminution of its MPhil in this way is less acceptable. Pursuant to the concept of "balance", therefore, there has been agreement to accommodate: the School's two-year masters degree strategy will be allowed, but will address the university's concern by renaming it an MSc. The decision is reasonable; the compromise critical for eventual acceptance of the CGS as a viable institution.

It is a decision not without risk, of course. CGS students will now receive after two years of coursework and thesis a degree which, within the rest of system, signifies more modest status. But the majority opinion among students and staff is that graduates will be judged "on the quality of the work, not on the title of the degree", and thus that the trade-off is worth making. If and as the professional reputation of the CGS grows, its MSc degree may overcome the label, establishing itself as equivalent to the MPhil. One long-term indication of the Consortium's effective institutionalization, in fact, will be the status eventually accorded its degree.

The point of this example is that institutional development is necessarily a matter of balance, between the ideal and the realistic and between the needs of the innovation and those of its environment. It requires as well a willingness to negotiate accommodation and to take risks. Negotiation can be made more effective, of course, and the risk mitigated to the extent that the developing institution has a sufficiently clear sense of its purpose and direction to allow reasonable compromise, flexibility and adaptation -- characteristics of the CGS which have been its strength as an innovation.

### CGS and Its Environment: An Interactive Relationship

The economic, social and political environments of the CGS have clearly influenced the course of its development by the limited resources they can offer. The fragility of its context has necessitated the School's decision to establish roots within the university system in order to draw on requisite human and infrastructural resources. Neither in the content of the programme nor in its implementation would it have been possible or appropriate for an education-research institution of this kind to remain self-contained. Its continuance is justifiable and viable only on the basis of its serving its client and member needs. In consequence of this reality, and notwithstanding the opinion of some students that it could be doing more, the Consortium is increasingly taking the initiative in reaching out to establish alliances with its critical "others" within both the university system and the wider socio-political community. In so doing, it has begun to provide evidence of how the institutional development process can influence, and be influenced by, its environments.

One example of positive and intended interaction with the political environment has been the Consortium's proactive relationship with CARICOM. Through regular presentations to the Committee, the CGS has succeeded in securing critical endorsement from the Ministers of Education as to the merit of its aims. Although yet to be translated into actual support for its core costs, such explicit recognition at the policy level has permitted its "in principle" inclusion within the university allocation category. It has also undoubtedly contributed to its legitimacy in the region, a status in turn enabling several countries to provide at least modest fellowship support. Perhaps most important in the longer run is the opportunity provided by the CARICOM presentations for governments to see the "thinking behind" the Consortium and to establish at least a degree of ownership over its development. Credibility is a largely ephemeral commodity, and the ultimate impact of the School will be its ability to persuade governments, as eventually its principal funders and users, of the merit of its purpose and design. Over time, this status will have to come through the quality of its graduates and research. It will remain an important function of the School's management, however, to continue such outreach to ensure a personal and professional public face.

According to one senior UWI officer, the Consortium is already beginning to facilitate a more integrated social science community in the region by providing it "a new and increasingly useful window" on itself, a forum through which ideas and issues reflecting a range of different disciplinary and developmental perspectives are finding expression. In part, this facilitative role has been a function of the programme itself, presenting an opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange among students from across the region and from different work and academic backgrounds. In addition, and partly at the urging of the students, the School is taking a more activist role in promoting interaction with and among members of the wider community through open seminars, publications, and regional consultations.

In a somewhat more indirect way, the School seems also to be serving as a catalyst to the region's developing a more cohesive strategy for support to higher education. Its continued and growing presence in the region, the result both of a high donor-funded profile and of its success at drawing high calibre students and staff, may well serve the rest of the region as a usefully motivating point of comparison and competition. According to one UWI Pro-Vice Chancellor, the CGS should constitute "a form of pace setter" to which the rest of the academic community, for the sake of its own continuity, will need to respond through improvements in its work. The comment reiterates two principles mentioned earlier: that the process of institution building must account for its impact on the wider context, and that this impact should be symbiotic. It will invariably be two-directional; it must necessarily be mutually beneficial.

The relation between a newly evolving institution and its associated environments must be interactive if the innovation is to have ultimate impact. But the relationship needs to be developed cautiously; interaction can easily produce negative consequences where the environment is fragile and the innovation significantly strong by comparison. In the case of the CGS and its environments (particularly the academic), two inter-related concerns have already been identified by staff and students: that the School risks growing at the expense of the system as a whole; and that such weakening will inevitably redound to the School's disadvantage. This

view is not universally held within the CGS, nor is it in fact common. Most faculty and students contend that a strong CGS will not weaken the rest of the system because the resources it is drawing would not otherwise have been available to the university. Nor is there any real competition for students. While it is clear that the School is attracting among the more capable students, most students made it equally clear that had the Consortium not been available as an option, they would have tried to pursue their graduate programmes outside the region. No other departments, with the exception of Business Management, offer full-time graduate training; none have a strong research component; none focus specifically on development issues within a cross-sectoral paradigm -- all characteristics identified by the students as central to their decision to apply to the Consortium.

This same lack of competition holds for staff who acknowledged being drawn to the School because of the opportunities provided for research and a more intensive interaction with students, opportunities not typically available elsewhere in UWI due to lack of budget, time and institutional encouragement. For some, in fact, the School is "serving as a kind of safety-valve", enabling them to stay in the region instead of looking for positions in the North. Again, the university is not the competition.

While acknowledging this majority view, it is also important to recognize the logic of the minority concern that the School does have the potential for negative impact on the university's social science departments; a potential which will increase in direct proportion to the School's success unless counterbalancing steps are taken. As an innovation, the insertion of an institutional development activity into an existing, presumably balanced, system will necessarily create a new dynamic, new sets of relationships and new demands within that system, resulting in a certain degree of imbalance and dysfunction. This is particularly the case where normal resources are scarce and, thus, where the sense of comparative disadvantage engendered by an endowed "project" (regardless of whether the benefits would otherwise have been applied to the regular system) may well lead to a reduced commitment to, or involvement with, the existing provision. As expressed by one CGS associate staff, the problem may be one of default rather than of design;

"we are in the position of pulling people, if not actually money, from the departments and so there is a sense in which the School is "at their expense". The CGS allows me to function more completely at a good graduate level, which is a positive contribution to me, but what about my department and my discipline? They are necessarily getting less of my attention and time because of it."

Obviously, such a situation is not one envisioned in the purposes of the School. According to a former director, "the spin-off result of a stronger Consortium should not be one of stopping the growth of the departments, but rather of consolidating the network" by providing an integrative, interdisciplinary forum of exchange and development. Thus, while the School may to some extent be creating dislocations by "swimming against the tide of narrow isolation" among the departments, "it is a tide that should be swum against" (UWI officer).

Within this perspective, the notions of accommodation and adaptation make sense as factors

critical to institutional development and institutionalization. Part of the accommodation in this case will inevitably include some in-tandom strengthening of the departments.

"Unless this happens, the School will be weakened by having to function within an even weaker environment. It won't be able to maintain its multi- disciplinary or even being full-time, but soon will become (by default) *the* viable graduate department and will then have to serve a wider client or student base, winding up much like the departments are now -- inundated with students and without the luxury of adequate resources to handle them." (CGS staff)

The School would be weakened, too, if the undergraduate programmes from which it draws its students and associate staff decline, with the most capable leaving to institutions outside the region and the quality of the disciplinary curriculum (the foundation of CGS students' ability to handle interdisciplinary analysis) declining accordingly, as cause and effect of the weakened teaching and research base.

"To concentrate on strengthening the Consortium without putting into place a systematic and serious plan of support to the undergraduate programme is creating a situation where the head and brains are developed at the expense of the roots. In the long run the Consortium will also have to fail because the departments are the core which feeds it" (CGS staff)

Viewed within this framework, the Consortium must constitute a case of comprehensive institutional *strengthening*, including strengthening of UWI. By its nature, it must be multi-dimensional. While the nucleus of the process is institution building (establishing the legitimacy and the sustainable programme delivery capability of a single new institution), it includes a second-level dimension of institutional strengthening (extending the resource and skills base of the university, its most proximate and indeed integral institutional environment). Reiterating an earlier point, it is critical that institutional development be viewed at both the micro and macro levels. While analytically separable, in reality they reflect contiguous points along a continuum and are inherently interactive, encompassing for the institution and its environments implications for the formulation of long and short-term goals and for attending to direct and corollary consequences.

It is an indication of the quality of the institution building process exemplified by the Consortium that it is already beginning, at least in a preliminary way, to address this issue of system strengthening. A major result of the 1990 Regional Consultation in Trinidad was agreement on a review committee expressly to explore potential options, including:

... the recommendation for a single Graduate Faculty or School of Social Sciences ... the option of the Consortium as a core entity; ... the relationship between the entity and the ongoing and proposed programmes at other campuses; ... the best structure to effectively implement the entity at the three campuses and University of Guyana; ... (development) of a network to include (different degree) programmes; ... means of rationalizing



resources to strengthen and consolidate the entity; and ... (ensuring) that the experiences of the Departments are adequately documented. Report on the Regional Consultation, 1990:11-12

Unfortunately, neither at the present time nor in the foreseeable future, are the departments likely to reach a level of capacity sufficient to provide effective complementarity to the CGS in terms of mounting full-time programmes or a strong research-orientation. From the viewpoint of one CGS staff,

"nor are they probably strong enough to provide even adequate numbers of people able to supervise CGS students who might choose to go back to their disciplines to complete their programmes, in some form of combined degree, or to do their thesis fieldwork."

Pressures for admission to the undergraduate programmes are heavy and, according to a Pro V-C, "priority must be given to serving this public before moving to the next, graduate, level". Since the only feasible way to serve this public, given current resources, is through part-time programmes, UWI staff are left no time and little professional incentive to develop or deliver comprehensive graduate studies or to incorporate a significant research agenda. Unfortunately, as donor funds diminish, the CGS seems likely to be sharing this less-than-ideal reality.

#### Institutional Environment: Implications for Donors

The need to facilitate institutional development in such a way as to account for the wider environment has obvious implications for what donors can and should do. They will be limited by the inevitability of prevailing conditions. There is little that can be done by a donor to alter the economy of a country or region, for example, or to induce more meaningful intra-regional cooperation. Nevertheless, donors and implementors of institutional development activities must identify and take into account the environmental context in making their initial assumptions and setting their goals, in deciding where, how and through whom to apply their conditions and channel their resources. It is critical that they look within these environments for opportunities to strengthen them as well as the institution, and that they avoid exacerbating system weaknesses through strategies which put, or are perceived to put, that system at risk.

Equity and justice will make inadmissible any intervention which threatens an existing system. Learning and social change theory, too, suggest that such an intervention must be untenable. The extent to which the social, political or institutional environment of any institutional development activity is able to support the purposes and evolution of that activity will be directly proportionate to the level and quality of its involvement in the planning and application of the activity and to the benefits perceived to derive from it.

Corollary to this proposition, the success of institutional development is a condition of the parallel maturation of its surrounding environments, in terms both of their understanding of the

rationale and methods of the innovation and of the enhancement of their own capacities. In this sense, institutional development can be understood as a dual process: first of determining what the overlapping environments are, how they work and whether and how they should be further encouraged; and then of identifying and applying appropriate mechanisms for strengthening those systems as part of the institution building process.

Just as support to research activities must consider the dissemination as well as the conduct of research as a legitimate part of the "cycle", institutional development similarly constitutes a cycle and cannot be considered complete without establishing the institution's "place" with respect to its communities, and giving support to the overall strengthening of those communities.

Institutional development is also unlikely to happen independently of either HRD or institutional development activities which have gone on before in the area. In fact, to the extent it is intended to result in sustainable strengthening of the overall HRD provision in a country or region, any single institutional development activity should be conceived as being only one discrete event within a longer, more comprehensive and interlinked process. Major institutional development activities, of which the CGS is a particularly cogent example, are rarely beginnings and ends in themselves, but rather are consequences of and precursors to other such activities. Certainly in the case of the CGS, success so far has been a result of previous donor support to both UWI and ISER: to individual scholarships and research (Ford Foundation and other graduate fellowships); to specific training and attachment exercises (IDRC's support to the S&T Policy Workshops, for example); to networks, publishing and exchange.

It was obviously not the problems of the Caribbean alone which stimulated the School's foundation, nor is it the continuing pressure of socio-economic decline which is keeping it alive. Rather, it has been the coincidence of need for more qualified, developmentally sensitive social scientists *matched* with available academics, experienced researchers and able administrators committed to and cognizant of development issues and able to articulate to the region and to donors both the problem and an institutional solution. Any numbers of developing country environments offer an equally if not more challenging situation of need; few have access to the critical mass of appropriately skilled and motivated people able to take effective action. It is, thus, valid to propose that a necessary condition of broadly-aimed institutional development is the existence of a minimum base of established capacity, at the individual and system level, whether developed on the basis of indigenous HRD provision or through previous and incremental donor support.

Within this framework, an obvious strength of the CGS is its contextual grounding, and the donors apparent recognition of this status. It was the perceived deficiencies and priorities of the region which provided the initial justification for the School. While these have limited the speed and scope of the School's eventual development, they have at the same time prompted its management, and to some extent its students, to be more proactive than the norm in reaching out to provide information and invite participation of the wider community.

Donor support has had an influence in each of these areas, in funding the initial inception

activities and providing infrastructural resources not available from the community. It is important that this support has been given with sufficiently flexible schedules to allow gradual, iterative evolution of the programme, and has fostered, though in a probably still too limited way, some of the School's outreach initiatives. As the CGS matures, the definition of what constitutes "the Consortium" will inevitably be broadened to accommodate increasing interaction with other community members. This will have consequences for the range of activities donors consider legitimate for funding under the institutional development rubric, including more support by both the School and its donors to dissemination, networking and system-development activities i.e. to publishing and distribution of research; to staff exchange and professional development; to "marketing" of graduates through workshops and seminars; to inter-departmental curriculum development and implementation.

Particular attention will need to be given to ISER in this respect, representing as it does a level and relevance of resource support to the CGS unlikely ever to be available from donors directly. As such, it constitutes for donors an excellent "window of opportunity" for strengthening the CGS expressly through its wider system base, realizing at once the dual institution building *and* strengthening components of the institutional development process.

## CHAPTER 5

### INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CGS

#### Introduction

Many of the details of the CGS presented in this section have been discussed within the context of the previous discussion. The purpose of this chapter is to consider those particular features of the Consortium which most specifically and succinctly characterize it as an institutional development activity and which suggest the likelihood, or otherwise, of its continued success.

#### Structure and Function

Building an institution like the CGS requires not merely the contribution of resources to an established base of political legitimacy, culture and purpose, but the actual *creation* of such a base. Rather than filling gaps in on-going programmes, staff complements and resource infrastructures, it has meant designing and constructing these elements. It has meant establishing *new categories* of expectations for student and staff concerning the orientation and nature of the programme to be undertaken and to its quality; *new classifications* for the knowledge and skills to be subsumed within the curriculum as a result of its being broader and more research focussed; and *new vocabulary* to reflect the emerging concepts of multi-disciplinarity and regional relevance. It has also meant putting in place a new physical entity involving resources, logistical adjustments and political influences, all of which will invariably compete at some level with the existing system. Such activity implies significant change for the wider system, changes in status relationships, self-image and relations with the donor community.

In the case of the CGS, the building task has been made considerably easier in that the principal organizers have been from the region and, in many cases, from the university system itself. Outside intervention has come chiefly in the form of financial resources, but even these have been provided according to locally-set design and scheduling priorities. This has been key to the Consortium's effective "take" within the region. A completely external intervention managed through a foreign executing agency and/or applied through foreign staff would have resulted in a significantly altered tone and style to the process. In the first instance, it would have required the donors to establish their own credibility in the region as having not just the capacity but the right to judge its problems and undertake a major HRD solution on its behalf. While the existing university system may harbour some resentment against the resources of the Consortium, few could argue the validity of the case made for its founding, or the legitimacy of its founders in making that case.

The Consortium is further strengthened by the fact of its being, although a new institution, not a unique institutional type. Essentially, it is a university graduate school, differing from UWI only to the extent it is full-time, multidisciplinary and research oriented. Otherwise, it is a

known quantity. Thus, though the specific categories, classifications and vocabulary may be new, the generic paradigm, coursework, roles and relationship of staff to students and School to the wider system are normal to a university and readily understood.

One particular caveat to this position refutes a reference made earlier to learning: that learning can be more difficult in situations of similarity than of difference; that it is more difficult to recognize a variation on a known theme than a fully new theme. Had the CGS been more atypical as a graduate institution, it might have elicited more conscious effort on the part of the university to understand it and to accommodate its special structure. As it is, the School is in many ways seen as essentially like the rest of the system and characteristics which it might consider critically unique and necessary to maintain, outsiders tend to see as peripheral. From UWI's perspective, the Consortium would function as well without being full-time, multidisciplinary or research-based, simply as another department. To an extent, such a viewpoint is accurate. From the perspective of the CGS, however, the move would seriously undermine its image as a distinct institution meriting special consideration for support from both its donors and its adjunct communities.

Maintaining the essence of the innovation while making the necessary contextual accommodations requires considerable clarity of purpose in order to distinguish the necessary from the simply preferred. Clarity and consistency of purpose are, perhaps, the most striking characteristics of the Consortium. Decisions concerning programme design, content and methods are invariably justified with reference to specific goals and, for the most part, there is common agreement among management, staff and students as to what those goals are. Such coherence suggests both that members know and accept the intellectual merit of what is being developed, and that they have a certain commitment to it.

According to implementation theory, knowledge and commitment of key players and decision-makers are critical factors in the eventual success of the innovation. They underlie the sense of ownership which allows, in turn, for the flexibility, adaptation and incremental application necessary for the new structure to achieve integration within itself and in terms of its environment. In the case of the CGS, consistent attention to coherent goals has provided a common core around which changes to curriculum, student management and degree criteria are made without loss of direction or forward progress. Clarity and consistency of goals serve thus as guides to practice in what is necessarily a complex process. They permit the CGS to adapt the innovation without becoming scattered in a multiplicity of uncoordinated or inconsistent revisions.

In consequence, the CGS programme "hangs together"; the various course components complement or augment one another, design and methods are generally congruent. Lecturers are encouraged to do their own research and close research linkages are maintained with ISER. Both factors serve to operationalize the research ethos and culture promoted by the School. The research agenda of the CGS is itself becoming more focussed, framed within the three broad areas of poverty, technological change and sustainable development. This provides students a further guide to their own studies; reinforces the School's commitment to research as a serious

component of its agenda; and, will eventually enable the School to produce a more integrated body of research analyses. The research focus is also incidentally facilitating the inclusion of the CGS as part of other donor initiatives, such as an upcoming CIDA-funded UWI institutional development project with much the same thematic focus.

Structurally, the School is in somewhat of an anomalous position. It is neither completely in the university, as an integral component of the system, nor completely out of it, as a self-contained unit. At present, the situation provides a double benefit: access to a major part of UWI's infrastructure coupled with effective control over its own agenda.

It is in the long-run, however, an untenable position. As Douglas points out, mature systems (like UWI) tend not to admit "free-riders", maintaining their identity to a large extent by creating "a stable well-defined boundary around the group" through pressures toward compliance with group norms and against instances of "selective benefits" (1986:39). Members are expected to "buy into" the parameters an institution imposes on perspective, behaviour, resources and obligations. As described earlier, UWI already requires compliance to administrative regulations and deference to standards represented by its degree. It is likely that, as the CGS grows stronger, UWI's need to exert group boundary rules will also strengthen.

At the same time, the CGS benefits from access to an already established infrastructure and degree rather than having to design and/or prove the credibility of its own. Realistically, the School could not expect to maintain itself as a completely independent unit, on its own or within UWI. To the extent the Consortium is attempting to make itself into a viable graduate department, it must necessarily be a functioning and responsible part of the wider academic and hiring communities. It cannot hope otherwise to attract good students, place its graduates, draw and maintain senior staff or have its research accepted as legitimate. While chafing somewhat under the regulations, the School quite clearly benefits from the association. The academic strength of the students deciding to apply to the programme is in major part a consequence of the alliance with UWI. Further, and for the foreseeable future, the School will have to rely on seconded UWI staff to make up its teaching core. These staff are unwilling to come permanently to the CGS without assurance of promotion and tenure, benefits currently available only through UWI.

## Leadership

Leadership will have a direct and significant effect on any institutional development activity. Strong and capable direction can reinforce a strong design and often be effective at shoring up a weak one. Weak or uncommitted direction, on the other hand, can deny the realization of an otherwise good programme design by impeding or ignoring the need for coherent, consistent guidance. Leadership will in large measure determine what the institution's effective goals and methods are by determining how the programme is applied. In the case of the CGS, for example, initial debate as to whether the School should focus on administrative training or academic provision was resolved not so much through a negotiated policy decision, but as a

consequence of the appointment of a first director who wanted, and fostered, the latter.

From its inception, the leadership of the CGS has provided a good balance of professional credibility and managerial competence. One result has been strong relations with donors, a critical factor in institution building where funding commitment must be based more on faith in the individuals concerned than on the precedence of organizational competence.

It is reasonable to suppose that over the course of an institutional development process the characteristics constituting "appropriate" leadership will change: from an initial emphasis on charismatic professional competence with some managerial capacity, through more of a balance as a wider band of staff and community come to accept the idea of the innovation and to expect effective and efficient application, to an essentially management focus with professional expertise enabling expression of overall, coherent framework, but no longer necessary to stimulate interest or commitment. It appears that the Consortium is still at the middle stage of its leadership evolution. It is not yet sufficiently established to no longer need to sell itself through senior staff and visiting lecturers, yet it is beginning to need a stable management base to provide concrete evidence of the reliability of its functions, its fiscal responsibility and its academic standards.

Given the relatively small staff, it is difficult to define the School in terms of hierarchical versus democratic management style. Overall, it appears to function as a small collaborative group, drawn together through a fairly high degree of consensus about basic goals and approaches and through considerable discretionary authority on professional matters exercised by the staff in terms both of their disciplinary and departmental work and their research and curriculum development activities. In its encouragement of independent staff and student judgement and initiative, the CGS leadership is fostering a strong base of joint management responsibility for developing the programme, "arranging organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their goals...by directing their own efforts toward achieving organizational learning." (McGregor 1960:180). As the case study did not include observation data, no assessment is possible as to the extent to which this management style is being applied. However, none of the interviews indicated anything other than equal participation by staff in providing input to the School's direction and none were hesitant to express alternative points of view on issues such as curriculum content or programme implementation.

The leadership style of the CGS is particularly conducive to institution building in allowing and enabling a norm of professional exchange. This has led, in turn, to shared concepts of, and responsibility for, the School's continued internal evaluation. It is an approach particularly congruent within the context of a knowledge-creating institution like the CGS with its goal of developing new paradigms and a multidisciplinary programme. Traditional disciplines will not engender understanding of one another's paradigms without regular communication. Nor will old knowledge categories and interpretive patterns be opened to new insights without the challenges which come from continuing exchange. In a situation of few concrete professional rewards (little extra salary, no tenure and high professional risk), the fact that the School allows scope for meaningful staff input and encourages students to test their evolving theories has been central to securing sustained commitment to the innovation.

It is an approach to management which makes pragmatic as well as intellectual sense in an institutional development context. Attempting to limit decision-making to a few, either by retaining exclusive jurisdiction or by failing to reach out to relevant individuals and communities, will inevitably lead to resistance if not antagonism; it will do nothing to engender co-operation.

The CGS appears to be achieving co-operation through a combination of open leadership and an insistence on hand-selected staff. Though the latter has a negative potential (provoking accusations of isolationism), both factors seem nonetheless to contribute to a particularly high intellectual energy among staff -- and perhaps in consequence, among students. Successful institutional development is ultimately a result of individuals deciding to work together, entrepreneurs undertaking a different approach to their work through collaboration with others in the belief that their goals can better be realized through joint effort. Presumably, the benefits to be gained are considered sufficient to warrant the risk, work and uncertainty involved, including the need to develop (in Douglas' terms) new shared analogies and collaborative mechanisms. Entrepreneurs are by definition intellectually creative and proactive, and this appears to be the type of person the CGS is attracting. If the School can continue to draw a proportion of such people on a regular basis, the enthusiasm for and openness to alternative perspectives and methods they bring with them could well serve to maintain the School's innovative edge and establish its permanence.

Several factors are contributing to the ability of the School to attract such staff. From a somewhat negative perspective, it is a function of there being no competition from elsewhere in the region; the departments cannot provide the equivalent opportunities to participate in research, curriculum innovation or programme design. More positively, it is a function of a leadership which has consistently pursued a policy of refining the goals and methods of the programme and of explicitly inviting staff participation in that process. It is also a function of the type of support it has received from donors and from the university. Rather than insisting on specific fixed agendas and content, both agencies have been reasonably non-intrusive, allowing the School room to manoeuvre and genuinely to involve staff in planning and implementation decisions. These characteristics have laid a foundation of internal *ownership*, enabling staff to apply their professional skills and interests to both their own and the School's continuing advantage.

## Students

There is nice consistency of character between the leadership of the CGS and its students. Academically high quality students, as well as staff, are being drawn to the School by the reputation of its professional managers and its priorities of academic innovation, research and institutional autonomy. More notable than the academic ability of the students *per se*, however, are their motivation to engage intellectually and personally in the experiment, their confidence in being able to succeed and their committed attention to the quality and direction of the programme. Several students described themselves as "high-flyers", people both expected and



expecting to make a professional mark in the region. Partly in consequence of this perception, most see themselves as taking relatively little risk in committing a major part of their post-graduate education to an experimental programme. In these first years, they consider their own capabilities will do more to ensure the School's success than vice-versa: "It will be by the quality of our work and our ability to market our skills that we, and by extension the School, will be judged".

As both cause and effect of this confidence, the students are relatively atypical in the extent of their involvement in issues of programme quality and content. Being an experiment, of course, the CGS invites such attention, continuing still as an open-ended enterprise to which students (and staff) can expect to "make a difference" through their feedback and in the success of which they have an obvious stake. The School's success must ultimately be a mirror to their own.

The School's open management style complements these characteristics, providing students a number of entry points for meaningful participation in decisions concerning the evolution of the programme. Not only is feedback explicitly invited, it is often enough acted on to reinforce continued input. There is also structural support for such participation. The small staff-student ratio, the regularity and ready access to teachers and managers, and the relative ease with which management is able to respond with programme adjustments, all serve to produce a reasonably flat decision-making process.

Such features of the School's membership and structure reflect the symmetry between the individual and the institution which Douglas defines as a necessary condition of institutionalization, enabling a buying-in to the expectation of mutual benefit. One small irony here is that the students tend to be pushing in a traditional direction: toward more focus on the disciplines, less on research requirements and clearer guidance from staff on the content and standards of research papers.

It is an inclination toward the conservative which should not be surprising; it is certainly not unreasonable. The success of any innovation will tend to be inversely related to the extent of the change required. Any inclination students themselves might have toward an innovative educational experience will realistically be mitigated by the realization that the hiring and professional communities reviewing their qualifications will do so on the basis of well-established criteria and expectations. Themselves institutions, these agencies exist largely by virtue of their ability to maintain conceptual parameters and boundaries which define behaviour. Within this context, it is a definite benefit for students that the School's multidisciplinary and research goals are being defined as complements to, rather than replacements of, traditional approaches. And it makes sense that students are tending to encourage this direction.

The conservative inclination of the students is consistent, too, with their academic background and the relatively structured content and presentation of CGS coursework. Students come to the programme with strong academic credentials, but the disciplinary base of a BA is typically a fairly fragile one. Learning theory suggests, however, that the ability to experiment with novel combinations of ideas and knowledge is directly related to the amount of control one has over

those structures, and so it is not illogical that CGS students evidence some insecurity in their ability to handle a multidisciplinary approach, to accommodate contending concepts or to synthesize cross-sectoral paradigms. To the extent that few have had the opportunity to experience research, nor is it illogical that they feel tentative about pursuing independent analysis at a senior research level. On a simply pragmatic basis, it makes sense for them to look for guidance from teachers whose particular strength is research and whose reputation they know to be high.

All of this is reinforced from the School's side by a curriculum rather more innovative in content than in delivery. While there is no doubt merit in structured methods given the need to maintain consistency over a number of different lecturers and the nascent state of the programme, it is an approach which may not be overcoming students' intellectual reticence or facilitating their independent analysis and judgement.

### The Programme

The main characteristics of the Consortium's MSc and PhD programmes have already been described, principal among them being the focus on socio-economic development and policy issues of the region; on the philosophical and historical evolution of Caribbean thought; and on the production and use of a range of approaches to research design, methods and analysis. The course topics are not in themselves unique. In the context of the Caribbean, however, the particular strength of the curriculum lies in its attempt to create a comprehensive, holistic and integrated approach: to generate a more realistic paradigm of the development process through a multidisciplinary perspective; to strengthen the place of research in that process by linking the substance of the coursework to research application; and to extend the quality of these learning efforts by ensuring the adequate provision of collateral learning supports (i.e. access to primary data sources and reference materials, computer training, dissemination and networking). Staff and students may differ somewhat on the intensity with which they seek to realize these various elements, but the overall confluence of their image as to what the programme should be is clear and constitutes a fundamental strength of the CGS.

An equally critical programme characteristic in terms of enabling the building of the institution has been its full-time status. Made possible through donor fellowships, the format is allowing the CGS not simply to provide a more intensive learning experience for the students, but to create among them and the staff an organizational culture. It is a level of course provision that others in the university system acknowledge as a legitimate and, in the long-run, probably necessary goal for good graduate education, a way to "to give students the time, energy and opportunity for the kind of intellectual exchange with each other and with the staff which are absolutely essential if we are to make any progress toward the serious provision of graduate studies in the region". But it is a characteristic also recognized as an anomaly in that system, and the characteristic least likely to be institutionalized once donor support has been withdrawn. Admission demands on UWI are heavy, answerable only through part-time programmes, and pressure is already on the CGS to incorporate this level of provision into its programme.

The pressure is serious from an institution building perspective, reflecting an inherent tension between sustainability of structure and sustainability of function. It is a dilemma with which the School must actively deal, but one unlikely to be easily resolved. Clearly, there is merit in extending admission to a wider community. Government officers, for example, who can attend only part-time might well benefit from exposure to new development paradigms and research methods applicable to their work. Such would certainly serve the School's aim of marrying research with practice. Unfortunately, an extension of the programme in this way would also contradict its methodological priorities of intensive staff-student interaction, time for reflection and reasonable opportunities for fieldwork.

As the School further matures and establishes its programme parameters, it may become better able to tailor delivery modes to other client groups. Its positive experience so far with balancing the needs of its environment with its own goals should provide it a good base. Nevertheless, an important question will be whether the CGS can hold out long enough to establish itself as a viable "full-time" option before having to adopt the less effective programming requirements to which the rest of the system is subject.

## CHAPTER 6

### INSTITUTION BUILDING AND MANAGEMENT

#### Introduction

After five years, both the structures and content of the CGS remain in flux, a reflection of the fact that institutional development is a long-term proposition. The School is still engaged in efforts to determine how best to interpret, balance and apply its broad statements of purpose so as to maintain internal integrity and coherence while accommodating to clients, users and referent communities. Adjustments to structures, functions and strategies will continue as long as the institution continues, of course, with only the range and reactivity of such adjustments diminishing over time as a consequence of institutionalization.

One difficulty for funders and managers of institutional development is recognizing the nature of these changes, where they are a positive reflection of effective institutional evolution and movement toward stability; and where they indicate a process which is floundering. From a systems perspective, regular revision of outputs and inputs can be a sign of overly ad hoc or inconsistent management. From the perspective of organizational change theory, however, such adjustments may in fact be evidence of the capacity of the institution to adapt and a positive sign of sustainability. The distinction between directed change and reactive crisis management can be a fine one, but need not constitute a black box. What is required is careful monitoring from both inside and outside the institution, of both the fact of change and of its causes, consequences and characteristics.

The strength of the CGS is in large measure evident in the attention it has given to reflective adaptation and change. One example of this is the newly-developed curriculum, none of the changes in which appear to have been either superficially reactive or ad hoc. Rather, each of the elements can be linked in a logically coherent way to an identified weakness in the programme or to a developmental purpose. For example:

The School's goal of "producing graduates who can prepare and analyze research in a policy or programme setting and at short notice", coupled with the students' goal of developing recognizable disciplinary expertise, resulted in a shift in the new curriculum to a more nearly equal balance between multidisciplinary and regular courses.

Persistent assessments of limited research capacity among students produced a more focussed and coherent research component of the programme, with more attention to interdisciplinary policy and research seminars, shorter research paper requirements allowing for more, and more consistent, supervision; and the articulation of a specific research agenda "the objective (of which) is for each generation of MSc research papers and PhD theses to represent a perceptible movement forward in the accretion of knowledge in the designated subject areas and... to broaden and deepen understanding of the central themes" (Revised Academic Programme, 1990:6).

The anomaly of students being able to "drop out" after the first year with an MSc, before consolidating their coursework through research, will be addressed through the single 2-year degree. The related ambiguity surrounding passage of students from the two masters programmes to the doctoral will be eliminated through a clearer demarcation of admission criteria and research requirements.

Recognition of the need to evolve further the conceptual and content base of the multidisciplinary perspective (what it means and how it can best be applied), and to implicate the staff as part of this, resulted in the decision not to admit new students for the 1990/91 academic year, using available staff time instead for a more collaborative and intensive curriculum analysis and design process than would otherwise have been possible.

Concern about the continuing deterioration of the university as a base from which it draws its students and to which it might send its graduates resulted in the School organizing a further regional consultation on the future of graduate studies generally in the Caribbean and to its seeking a role in a major institution development project in UWI (funded by CIDA).

Such examples of considered change are important in trying to assess the quality of CGS development in at least three ways. First, by explicitly undertaking this type of sustained review, the School has been able to avoid, or find solutions for, situations which might have weakened or prevented its further development. Secondly, examples of this type of institutional self-monitoring, as a characteristic of CGS management, is in itself a sign of the School's maturation. Whether or not the results of the review and adaptation are as planned, the fact of their being done is good evidence of a succeeding institution building process. Thirdly, they are indications that the staff, and to some extent the students, are assuming both a right and a responsibility for monitoring and directing the progress of the programme, activities which appear to be directly facilitating the School's emergence as a product of the region, not merely a transplanted northern model.

### Organizational Learning

"Nothing else but institutions can define sameness."

According to Douglas (1986:55), the defining characteristic of an institution is not its physical reality, but the perception among its members of shared categories; their acceptance of being somehow the same along a particular set of dimensions which they may be only partially able to explain. Again, although referring to institutions in the more generic sense of recognizable social groupings (i.e. family, neighbourhood, team), the concept is quite consistent with the behaviour of formal organizations. In these latter cases, too, infrastructure and resources are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the realization of a viable institution. Eventually, it will need to be defined by the norms, values, attitudes and expectations held in common by its

members and clients, whether or not these can be articulated and whether or not they are consistent with stated policy and function. According to organizational theory, however, the more explicitly and fully these categories and behaviours *can* be articulated, and the more precisely both implicit and explicit purposes *can* be aligned, the more effective the institution will be at determining and realizing its effective development.

Argyris and Schon have elaborated this idea using the concepts of espoused theory, theory-in-use and organizational learning. The first, "those theories of action to which (one) gives allegiance and which, upon request, one communicates to others"; the second, "the theory that actually governs... actions (and) which may or may not be compatible with one's espoused theory"; and the third, "the testing and restructuring of organizational theories of action", in order to establish congruence between what the organization *claims* to be doing and why, and what it is *actually* doing and with what result (1978:11).

Their analysis distinguishes levels and complexity of organizational learning, suggesting that for institutional development to succeed in the long term, attention must be given not simply to the extent to which its stated goals are being realized and its design implemented, but to the appropriateness of those goals and that design in the first instance. The distinction is between single- and double-loop learning, the first more typical of organizational evaluation, where members

... change internal or external environments of the organization by detecting errors which they can correct so as to maintain the central features of organizational theories-in-use. These are learning episodes which function to preserve a certain kind of constancy. (It is) a single feedback loop which connects detected outcomes of action to organizational strategies and assumptions which are modified so as to keep organizational performance within the range set by organizational norms. The norms themselves... remain unchanged... It is concerned primarily with effectiveness -- that is, how best to achieve existing goals and objectives. (1978: 18,21)

Double-loop learning, on the other hand, is a much rarer phenomenon and considers first principles. It is

an organizational learning cycle in which organizational norms themselves are modified... those sorts of organizational inquiry which resolve incompatible norms by setting new priorities and weightings of norms or by restructuring the norms themselves together with associated strategies and assumptions (1978:21,24)

It is through double-loop learning that the CGS appears to be making its most significant progress towards institutional development. The "synergy" noted by several IDRC documents and by this present study is clearly not simply a consequence of the happenstance assembly of the disparate components of the CGS. Rather, it is a result of regular analysis, assessment and revision which have considered the efficacy of the components themselves, their relevance to the goals sought and, in turn, the relevance of those goals to the wider social science and

development setting. It is a synergy, therefore, which has been actively facilitated both informally, though the frequent exchanges within the CGS made possible largely by the small numbers involved, and formally, through management committee structures, joint curriculum reviews and research dissemination seminars.

To a certain extent, the Consortium itself might be considered a result of double-loop learning on the part of the Caribbean social science community, its members considering not simply how well existing capacities were being developed and used, but what the field as a whole should be and do. The CGS reflects, in part at least, a different social science paradigm as conceived from within the setting; it is not simply an attempt to improve traditional provision as a result of outside intervention. This interpretation of CGS origins suggests the possible reason for its being able to evolve so coherent and, on the whole, well-received a programme; for local ownership appearing to have been so effectively established; and, related to both of these, for the willingness on the part of CGS managers and students to allow time for the innovation to negotiate its goals and methods. It might also suggest why institutions often fail to achieve these results: when they are established not as a consequence of reflected community learning, but as an external intervention designed in answer to a problem also defined externally.

A further enhancement to the Consortium's engaging in organizational learning is the complementarity between this type of learning and that required of staff and students in creating a new, multidisciplinary, social science framework. Both processes require reflection, exchange and negotiation of potentially competing assumptions and priorities in an effort to identify workable compromises for action. The following quotation from Douglas refers specifically to the tendency of scientific disciplines, and by extension institutions, over time to "forget", and within time to fail to communicate, their knowledge and experience. The comment provides a good rationale both for the multidisciplinary focus of the CGS programme and for including double-loop organizational learning as a necessary condition of institutional development:

... (the) obvious thing is that science is a collective enterprise. The hard problems and good solutions have been bumping around together for centuries... Thinking about it is as close as we can get to reflecting on the condition of our own thought. We can trace the logical operations, but it is extremely difficult to think about them critically. Are we using an exhaustive set of the (disciplinary) categories on which the logical operations are performed? Are they the right categories for our questions? What does rightness of categories mean? And apart from those we have put into an analysis, what should we say about the ones we have left out? What about the other social orders (development strategies? institutional arrangements?) that might have been? (1986:70)

## Donor Role

To the extent that organizational learning, and especially double-loop learning, is seen as a critical sign or measure of institutional development and potential sustainability, and that the capacity to undertake such learning is in large measure a function of a sense of ownership, the

role of donors is once again made complicated, this time by the assumptions of intervention on which they are based: that the nascent institution and its local builders are probably incapable of initiating or sustaining appropriate development (otherwise they would have done so on their own); and that the provision of resources entitles and requires the donor to apply a fixed project agenda defined by specific input and output objectives, methods and measures (as the only way to control accountability).

Referring specifically to organizational change agents, but with obvious applicability to donors, Argyris and Schon believe that intervenors

(need) to recognize that their main challenge is not to help an organization become more effective at the performance of a stable task in the light of stable purposes, but rather to help an organization restructure its purposes and redefine its task in the face of a changing environment. A term like "organizational learning" then becomes necessary in order to define the goals of intervention. (1978:320)

... and it becomes, also, both a critical measure of the successful realization of institutional development and a critical means to achieve it.

Sustainability in the context of a donor-supported institutional development activity is a rather slippery concept. As one senior UWI officer expressed the question, "how long does the institution or the programme have to exist before the donor considers it to be sustained? Five years? Ten? Maybe within two or three it could be considered to have adequately fulfilled its purpose". Perhaps within the context of institutional development, sustainability is more accurately understood as the capacity for self regeneration, a capacity achieved in turn through development of the capacities to question, adapt and negotiate; to engage in organizational learning. The role of the donor within this framework becomes one of facilitator as well as resource provider;

... to improve organizational learning by increasing the organizational store of useful knowledge, by improving the design of organizational programmes and by increasing the problem-solving capabilities of individual decision-makers. (Argyris/Schon 1978:324)



## CHAPTER 7

### INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE

#### Problems of Measurement

Institutional performance, in the context of an institutional development activity like the CGS, is difficult to assess in any definitive way. On what basis can effectiveness most usefully be judged: that it has produced 37 graduates? that a majority of graduates so far have found relevant employment? that it has received fellowship support from three participating countries? that it has maintained good and improving relationships within the Mona campus? that it has apparently succeeded at designing a new curriculum able to balance the multidisciplinary priority of the School with the students' priority for a disciplinary base? All of the above are essentially true of the CGS, and while numbers could be greater and relationships better, the situation indicates a reasonably good rate of return on the efforts made.

On the other hand, can it be considered efficient that however high the quality of its graduates or the speed of their programme completion, the School is still far from achieving financial sustainability? Is it efficient if PhD students must continue to go abroad to complete the requirements of a full degree, that the core staff remains limited to just two people, and that courses for next year's programme must be qualified as "subject to staff availability"? These are also true descriptions of the Consortium and indicate continuing weaknesses. They do, however, reflect conditions largely outside of CGS control, and ones against which mitigating steps are being taken.

Institutional development is neither a short-term nor linear process. After five years, to have established an academically coherent and credible programme, while simultaneously maintaining enthusiasm among staff and students and reasonably good relations with UWI, the wider community and donors, must be taken as sound indicators of effectiveness. That the School has so far failed to secure more solid local financial support is of concern less because of the continued dependence on donors it implies than because of the still limited commitment of local support it reveals.

There remains, too, the question of how successful future graduates will be in securing relevant employment. The School may eventually need to conduct more job market analyses and to increase its outreach to the communities it is seeking to serve. It is nonetheless a valid measure of the School's success that its students perceive their own chances for satisfying employment to be relatively good, that the quality of their skills and knowledge will essentially "sell themselves". Sooner rather than later, however, the Consortium will need to deal with the question of admitting other types of students (i.e. part-time, from different language bases, from other fellowship programmes) in order to broaden its reputation as a centre of excellence in the region and to generate more revenue. The irony is that the very reputation for excellence which draws strong students may be put into jeopardy by the need to reduce admission standards,

increase teacher-student ratios or expand course provision (at the expense of the research component).

Yepes (in Gomez/Alvarez, 1990:7) suggests five dimensions along which an institution can be considered "well run". There is evidence to suggest that the School is, in general, moving in a positive direction along all of them:

Through its consistent attention to a multidisciplinary development focus, a full-time research and coursework mix and interactive staff-student relations, the CGS is quite definitely establishing a *distinctive organizational culture* within the university system. While its *institutional memory* is somewhat hampered by a relatively unstable associate staff complement, it is a deficit mitigated to a considerable extent by staff working collectively on curriculum development, planning and evaluation, and thus putting permanently into the School's practice their various professional perspectives and expertise. The development of professional networks should further provide a useful repository of cumulative "lessons learned". In a more general sense, the detail with which events of the School's evolution have been recorded through reports and working papers will allow not only the facts of its history to be maintained, but also the underlying rationale for decisions made.

In tracing through the documents of the School, the coherence evident in statements of purpose and philosophy suggests that its *institutional perspective has been both a long-term and consistent one*. This is reinforced by the gradual and iterative implementation process the School has followed in realizing its goals. An institution with short-term horizons (pushed perhaps by anxious or directive donors) is less likely to pursue an inherently long-term organizational learning approach to programme development. The coherence of perspective evident over time within the CGS, despite changes in staff, is a consequence of the clarity with which goals were initially set, the attention given to their continued review and the institutional memory the School has been able thereby to sustain.

Directly related to this are the *good lines of communication and feedback* evident in the CGS, both within the School and to a lesser extent between it and the client-user communities. Both staff and students laud the quality of feedback sought and provided in the programme, and the care given to act on it. For students in particular, the extent to which their academic concerns were being taken into account are "reducing considerably" any risk they might have felt being in an experimental programme.

Establishing *community trust* is perhaps the most difficult task of an institution building activity. It is the element least under its control and typically least recognized as immediately needed. One area where the School has probably not developed sufficient communication and exchange is in respect to those UWI staff and students not participating directly in the programme and who, in some cases, view it as an elitist structure outside the system. Trust, of course, is a matter of perception and different

factors will be involved in creating it for the different actors concerned. Peers within the system may as yet be unconvinced that the innovation is not a drain on available resources, but the Ministries of Education and several of UWI's senior staff are comfortable. Applicants to the School evidence trust that it will provide them the credibility and knowledge promised and associate staff appear confident that it will enable them to pursue activities consistent with their own professional development. Particularly important in terms of its professional independence, the School seems also to have confirmed the trust of donors, which continue to provide support while exercising relatively little control.

A second set of factors considered by Gomez and Alvarez (1990:4) indicative of progress toward institution building also suggests that the School is doing well. Though presented in their review paper as discrete points of micro and macro analysis, in the CGS case it is perhaps more realistic to consider the five criteria as interactive.

Thus, the School's *ability to adapt to its environments*, and to some extent have those environments reciprocate, has enabled it to *satisfy* the learning concerns and *interests of its clients* while, at the same time, addressing its own professional *and programmatic goals*. Together, the result has been twofold: an *increasing quality* of education delivered and research realized which, in turn, are producing graduates better able to *contribute to general social well-being* and a higher profile for a new approach to graduate education itself in the region, one that is more coherent and more able to *benefit the wider social system* in a lasting way. All of this, of course, is serving to convince both donors and local governments of the value of continued and expanded support to the School, and thus to its *ability to survive and grow*, and to undertake additional programmes.

### Measurement of Goals Attained

Measurement of institutional development is probably most appropriately (though not necessarily most easily) done in terms of goals: the clarity, feasibility and consistency with which goals are defined; the quality of congruence between goals and the methods selected to attain them; and the presence and effectiveness of procedures for goal negotiation, operationalization and reconceptualization. Measurement of institutional performance in this sense is necessarily criterion referenced and process oriented: comparing results against intentions and assessing how effectively the organization is able to build on strengths and resources, adjust to limitations and impediments, and accommodate contending or competing priorities and perspectives.

A particular strength of the CGS has been its *ability to define and operationalize with clarity and focus a fairly complex set of programme and institutional goals*. These include training (to develop a comprehensive curriculum of high quality and produce 10-12 graduates a year); research (to generate a coherent series of staff and student development studies and have them used); and institutional development (to establish a professionally recognized, semi-autonomous graduate school, at least partially funded from local sources).

Realization of such a broad set of goals is made possible in part through a reduction in their scope. For example, the decision that full independence of the university system is not possible; that research requirements for a MSc degree must be kept within reasonable time and level of effort limits; and that a multi-disciplinary focus needs to be moderated by more traditional disciplinary provision. At the same time, ways are being found to ensure that the essence of the original, broader goals is sustained. Through research linkages with regional scholars and ISER, the School is maintaining a solid research agenda. Through increasing attention to outreach activities, it is strengthening its relevance as an HRD centre, and its political viability.

*Successful goal attainment is enhanced by their consistency and coherence.* In the case of the CGS, coursework supports research through the emphasis on theory, research methods and analyses of development problems. Professional relations with private and public organizations are furthering the School's links to the social science community and providing students access to research networks and potential employment. A further value in these linkages is the possibility that these organizations may eventually be willing to provide fellowships, a means both of helping ensure a strong human resource base from which they can draw and of developing the professional competence of their own staff (i.e. under the auspices of the "HRD Upgrading" component of the proposed CIDA CANUWI/ISP grant with which the CGS is expected to be involved). In a similar way, the internship programme is providing students the opportunity "to be exposed to the institutional contexts and policy problems to which their academic training must (eventually) be applied" (Report of Academic Year 89/90:4).

*Congruence between goals and methods is a good indication of eventual institutional development,* inconsistent or inappropriate methods seeming unlikely to produce the ends sought. In the case of the CGS, the goal of developing a multidisciplinary and research-based curriculum is being facilitated by a number of congruent means: the collaborative approach to curriculum development; student research seminars presenting a cross-section of disciplinary issues; and a two-year, full-time programme providing the occasion to complete both the multi- and single-discipline coursework and the research cycle. There is also congruence between the goal of establishing a relevant, cross-disciplinary programme of high quality and management methods which promote organizational learning, stimulate and use feedback and reach beyond traditional social sciences sources (into history and literature, for example).

It is through these last characteristics of *organizational learning and feedback* that the CGS has further succeeded in its performance with respect to goal negotiation and revision. One example of this are the efforts to clarify the kind of graduate intended from a multidisciplinary programme. Still being debated is whether the goal is to create discipline specialists able to function across sectors, to understand the paradigms, data and analyses of other disciplines and to recognize the comparative advantages of the different results produced by them; or whether it is to produce interdisciplinarians *per se*, if indeed such a type is possible. The consensus is toward the former, but it is a strength of the institution that a satisfying articulation of the goal continues to be sought.

A further aspect of measuring performance against goals concerns their accommodation to

reality. Some goals simply cannot be realized given the institutional context, and the strength of the institutional development process can be assessed in terms of how effectively this realization leads to changes to the scope or speed with which goals are attempted. The Consortium's performance in respect of this criterion appears reasonably realistic and flexible. It is acknowledged, for example, that implementation of a full-scale PhD programme is not yet feasible; that only a limited number of students can be admitted and that not all of the programme can be provided locally (hence the "sandwich" design). At the same time, continuing the doctoral programme in some form has been key to institution building in a number of ways: as evidence of the CGS as a serious graduate studies venue; as a goal for MSc students to work toward, thus encouraging attention to the quality of the masters' curriculum and research base of that programme; and as an incentive to attract and keep senior staff committed to research and theory building. Reducing somewhat the scope of the PhD provision is serving to keep the potential of an eventually more complete programme alive by ensuring that money, course development and staff supervision are adequate to ensure the success of those degrees that are undertaken.

One aspect of goal realization somewhat less successful has been the multidisciplinary focus. This goal *lacks clearly defined parameters both as a concept and as a field of study*. Based on a comparison of initial documentary statements of CGS purpose and current staff/student statements of what is actually occurring, there seems to have been modification of the idea overtime. Whether this is a positive or negative reflection on institutional performance, is difficult to judge. Do the adjustments made between the ideal of the concept and its more prosaic application have adequate internal logic and are they serving to sustain enough of the initial spirit of the innovation to justify its continuation? According to early CGS documents,

One of the main concerns is that the multidisciplinary programme of work devised for the Consortium should complement the uni-disciplinary orientation of the three university systems. In this way, the Consortium will fill a vacuum, help to set and maintain standards of scholarship without minimizing the on-going programmes... (Proposals, 1982:iv)

Opinion within the programme is that relatively little such complementarity obtains, or is actively being sought. While there may well be some implicit integration of the two perspectives through the teaching emphases of the associate staff, the explicit emphasis of the CGS remains one of pursuing the multi-disciplinary concept as separate and distinct.

*CGS performance in terms of generating local support is difficult to assess.* In the context of a generally weakening resource base in the region and the ongoing inclination of countries toward strengthening their national identity and autonomy, failure to support the CGS could be interpreted simply as consistent with the realities of the setting rather than as expressed opposition. While the comment that the School "is right in moving against this tide", and in expecting some concrete contribution to its maintenance from local governments, it is nonetheless a fact that economic and social pressures are strongly against the School's realizing its goal of local sustainability and cross-national collaboration. But while performance toward

these goals could be considered relatively weak in absolute terms, performance relative to ideal might better be achieved by reconsidering what is realistic.

A critical variable in assessing CGS performance as a graduate school is, of course, the *quality of its graduates*. Quality in this case is measured by such factors as the scope of their knowledge and theoretical perspectives, the rigor of the research and analysis skills acquired, and the relevance of expertise to potential employers and the discipline. While all of these are relatively nebulous as criteria, consensus of opinion from staff and students within the School, as well as from such outside observers as donors, ISER and UWI administration, is that the School is realizing this goal fairly well. Masters graduates have been finding generally relevant employment. Theses and research papers, while "still showing weaknesses in design and depth of analysis" according to staff, are beginning better to pursue themes consistent with the development problems of the region and cross-sectoral priorities of the School and are improving methodologically (an improvement expected to continue with the increased numbers of research methods and theory coursework in the new curriculum).

Also consistent with CGS goals is evidence "that the School is producing a group of students who are more distinctly Caribbean in their professional orientation"; who are capable of integrating both an international and a regional understanding of the nature and process of development and of maintaining in their analysis of these problems and processes a constructive tension between regional and international concerns. Precisely how this is happening, and whether such a mindset is manifesting itself in the subsequent work of these students are not clear. They are questions which should be pursued, however, if the School is to be able to assess the extent to which the new curriculum and programme design are further strengthening these learning outcomes, and hence the institutional establishment goals of the School.

### Institutionalization

Institutionalization is, of course, the ultimate performance criterion of an institution building activity. Realization of this characteristic means that the institution has achieved the cultural cohesion, resources, relations and legitimacy necessary to sustain itself and to achieve its goals. Relative to sustainability and durability, none of the other more substantive purposes of the organization will be realizable unless the organization can maintain itself with some degree of consistency.

But as with much else in this field, institutionalization constitutes a rather vague and shifting concept. It is, for example, highly interactive with other goals. As the institution becomes more stable, it is better able to realize its service and product delivery objectives. At the same time, as services and products become more consistently delivered and respected, the more established the institution itself will become. Of course, institutionalization will be determined not simply on the concretely observable characteristics of physical infrastructure, resources, procedures and products. The more abstract characteristics of norms, attitudes, status and perceived legitimacy must also be assessed. At any point in time as the institution develops, any of these

characteristics will be more or less well established, and the strength of the institution as a whole will vary accordingly.

The progress of the Consortium's institutionalization seems most fairly described as slow but positive. Although on the surface still unstable in being almost fully dependent on external funding, the School is developing a level of control over its design and implementation and an ability to generate moral and professional support which render it reasonably well "established". Institutionalization, however, is not a simple achieved/not achieved phenomenon. Rather, it happens with more or less success at different levels, and with respect to different components of the organization. As a training agent, for example, the CGS is fairly strong, capable of maintaining a steady intake of students and output of graduates of high academic calibre. While to some degree this is the result of the fellowships provided, it is nonetheless clear from students that it is a result also of the quality of the staff and the nature of the curriculum. At the same time, however, fellowship support is critical if the School is to maintain its full-time status and such support is external, dependent upon major donor input. From this perspective, the CGS has not moved very far toward permanence.

Institutionalization of the Consortium in terms of utilization of its products concerns two aspects. The first, the hiring of its graduates, has already been mentioned. The second concerns utilization of its research, its research-training capacities and, at a somewhat more abstract level, the realization of a generally stronger "pro-research" ethos in the region as a result of CGS graduates and dissemination activities. On all three measures, the School seems so far to have made only a marginal advance. It has not yet had time to establish a solid body of research results, but nor has it attempted specifically to bring development policy-makers and programmers into its work in much more than a peripheral way (i.e. inviting Planning Institute staff to occasional research seminars). As far as the case study could determine, no agency (including IDRC) has made use of the School as a venue for training its researchers, perhaps an indication that local and donor organizations do not yet see the School as sufficiently stable. It might also reflect the School's limited promotion of itself as provider of this particular and largely short-term, HRD need. It may also, of course, be a result of the donors' own lack of internal co-ordination, between their institution support and institution utilization activities.

A final criterion on which the institutionalization of the CGS might be judged is the extent to which it has been able to establish as a norm within the region the particular form of graduate education it is trying to encourage i.e. a full-time, comprehensive curriculum based on an integration of coursework with research. Again, it is still too early in the history of the School to make a definite judgement as to its successful institutionalization at this level. Nevertheless, there are signs that its presence and its programme characteristics are being noted and are beginning to generate at the very least a certain amount of discomfort with the status quo -- the first step of sustainable change.

## CHAPTER 8

### LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

#### The CGS as Model

The future of the CGS as an "alternative model for capacity building" in the Caribbean is uncertain. On the one hand, it is a professionally well-designed and managed graduate school. As such, it is beginning to serve the needs and interests of the region. At the same time, it is almost totally dependent on donor funding and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future as regional resources decline. Further, it is in the unsettled position of having to be semi-attached to UWI while seeking autonomy from it. While substantively and perceptually the CGS is becoming institutionalized as a training venue for senior social scientists, financially and structurally its stability is considerably less clear.

As suggested earlier, the use of the term "model" in the context of institutional development can be dysfunctional insofar as it gives a sense of inevitability: that if the right set of structures, functions, resources and objectives were put in place, the institution will develop in a sustainably stable way and its capacities, in this case as a training institution, developed. What appears to be succeeding in the CGS, however, is not the particular model (although the courses, staff and provision of fellowships do have a viable internal logic), but rather the coincidence of individuals with strong capacities to interpret the available structures and resources in a sound way. The same structural arrangements in another setting, or in the same setting with other donors, designers or managers would not have evolved in the same way or to the same point.

The conditions underlying the CGS "working", therefore, are twofold: (i) that those involved in the CGS have assumed a relationship with donors and the environment based on equality and local ownership of the project; and (ii) that they have had the intellectual and management capacity to initiate and maintain an iterative, interactive and gradualist "organizational learning" approach to the institutional development process. Relevant, too, is the fact that donors have played a largely non-directive and responsive role in structuring and applying their support. While explicitly this has meant confining their input largely to hands-off financial contributions, implicitly it has meant confirming a relationship of equity, professional trust, and tolerance for the ambiguity which necessarily accompanies the complex process of institutional development.

Problematic for a programme like the CGS are the high demands on time, personnel and resources required. A 10-year timeline is probably minimum to create, apply, test and achieve recognition as a graduate school, a major commitment for donors and local professional staff who make at the expense of other priorities and in the face of high-cost risks of failure. It is a level of commitment that few recipient countries or regions are able to sustain without outside intervention, presenting the double-edged dilemma of having to cope with disappointed expectations if a successful donor innovation is allowed to decline for want of continued local



funding; or of being committed to continued dependency by on-going acceptance of requisite donor input. Without such commitment, however, the CGS will involve a double risk: that the exercise *per se* will fail, and that the failure will reinforce the natural tendency of the university system away from engaging in innovation generally.

Despite its riskiness, and with little concrete support from the region, the School is nonetheless gaining *affective* ground as an institution. "In principle" support has come from CARICOM and consultations have begun to extend the CGS to other Caribbean countries. Such expansion should have a number of benefits: a broader socio-political perspective through new staff and student input; access to new issues and data with respect to regional history and development experience; additional networks of research and job contacts; and further sources of income. There are also potential negatives: additional strain on staff and material resources with greater demands of language, numbers and interests; more classroom and field-site requirements; more complex sets of relationships with different university systems.

### Potential for Institutionalization

Reiterating a previous point, CGS institutionalization is complicated by the fact of its happening at two levels: within the institution itself (stabilizing its internal roles, decision-making mechanisms, resource allocations); and as an institution within the wider system or environmental context (becoming integrated and valued within the university community, the UWI network and the Mona campus).

There is obviously an interactive relationship between the two levels, but not necessarily an easily-achieved one. Establishing itself effectively within Mona, its primary setting, will enable the CGS to strengthen its internal arrangements, drawing on the resources, administrative mechanisms and institutional status of that setting. At the same time, it must subject its evolving norms, strategies and goals to the regulations, procedures and constraints of that setting, required, therefore, to expend time and energy variously fighting interference or negotiating relationships. On the one hand, the innovation will inevitably lose some of its "cutting-edge" justification as it incorporates the structures and functions of the wider system. On the other, a nascent institution which entrenches its internal goals and patterns independently of its environment does so at the risk of limiting its ability to accommodate to that environment when necessary to implement its work. It risks relegation to a short-term experiment, however effective and valuable while it lasts, if it is too marginal to the existing environment to be sustained by it or to make any real difference to it. There is already some indication of the latter happening to the CGS. According to some UWI administrators, the School is establishing itself well as

... the locus of good graduate social science studies, just as ISER is the locus of good social science research, but this is going to last only as long as it can maintain its current *modus vivendi* of drawing donor money. Because local money is not there. Most increases in the budget must go into regular departmental salaries....The situation for the CGS is good now in terms of policy support within the region even though no money has

been approved (yet). There will be a problem, though, if it is not actually included in the next triennium round of funding as agreed by CARICOM.

Reluctance to provide concrete support and insistence that the CGS "pay its own way" are characteristics consistent with the natural tendency of existing institutions and systems to ensure no one gets a free ride; that all members (or potential members) bear the costs as well as the benefits of belonging. It is also clear, however, that no addition to an existing system, regardless of its inherent value, will be welcomed and incorporated on the basis of substantive merit alone. It must be seen to respect the system already in place and to play as fully as possible "by the rules", even as it might try to move that system toward improved practice.

And there is a reasonable degree of opinion in favor of the CGS being incorporated into the UWI system. A senior finance officer corroborated this view, that "although there are no immediate plans for local governments to take over funding of the School, such has always been the long-term assumption". Reiterating that institution building requires a long time-frame and that programme quality need be maintained, he stressed nonetheless the history of UWI taking over support of projects begun initially with external money, "as long as governments can find the money to give and as long as the institution proves itself".

### Future Prospects

The two most often expressed options for the future of the CGS are that it will become either the multidisciplinary component in a network of graduate school programmes, or "the" graduate school for the university. The first is the more consistently preferred, but unlikely to occur unless the other departments become strong enough to sustain equivalent graduate training for the disciplines. The CGS as the base of general social science graduate studies is more feasible, involving a growth of financial resources to support larger facilities, more staff and a broader range and number of fellowships. Substantive implications for the CGS and structural implications for UWI would be major, however. The Consortium would become increasingly dependent on donors and lose its key full-time, multidisciplinary characteristics. As the sole source of graduate education in the social sciences, it would need to admit part-time students, the likely majority seeking a traditional, non-research degree.

An particularly high cost would be incurred by the departments; "personnel, especially the more professionally committed, and money would be drawn away not only from the graduate courses but also from the undergraduate since both are intimately linked in terms of the work done". Few departmental staff would be left to strengthen the disciplines by doing research and theory development; rewards and stimulus for such work being found at the graduate level.

The choice of future is not clear-cut; it is nonetheless one which must be made. The CGS cannot be sustained as part of the region's graduate education while causing dislocation in the rest of the system. Institution building is not an activity related only to the particular institution involved, but must necessarily be considered as an integral part of those wider environments.

In consequence, these latter must be included when determining goals and disbursing resources.

Another perspective on the future of the CGS concerns the "bottom line" of the exercise. Is it the visibly recognizable and organized set of people, activities and infrastructure which is the CGS; or is the CGS the "messages" it is attempting to convey about appropriate content, methods and focus of graduate education. In other words, is it the physical reality of the School which is to be institutionalized and sustained, or the provision of a coherent, full-time research and coursework programme with a particular development theme and theoretical framework? If the latter, could the goal be achieved in other, less expensive, more readily sustainable and system - strengthening ways?

Rather than building a literally new institution to achieve its end, a more appropriate realization of the CGS might be as a resource and professional *co-ordinating association*, a body which could organize courses on the different campuses, provide money and resource persons to help selected department staff extend the theoretical and research scope of their graduate courses, and arrange fellowships to enable students to attend full-time. While not suggesting that another design necessarily be adopted and the present one disbanded, it is suggested that an institutional development activity should start first with its purposes and, from these, design the structures and methods best suited to achieve them; that it not begin with a certain structure as "given" because it has always been done that way.

### The Donor's Role

Donors' relations with the institution, and the quality and quantity of the their interventions, will be critical in shaping its future. Too few resources, too sporadically or rigidly applied will deny the it the margin, flexibility and independence needed for negotiating adaptive implementation. Too many resources, too loosely defined, may encourage goal expectations, methods and structures not locally sustainable, inhibiting institutionalization and overwhelming existing systems through competition.

If donors are too distant, acting simply as bankers, they will fail to develop the responsive sensitivity required to tailor support to the local context and to the inevitable changes in the institution as it matures. Such a relationship will too heavily depend on the accuracy and completeness of initial needs assessments, at best only points-in-time snapshots reflecting little of the dynamic reality of an institution in change. On the other hand, an overly intrusive relationship will impede the development of local ownership, precluding organizational learning, adaptation and integration.

Donor involvement in the development of an institution must move progressively and explicitly toward equitable partnership of some form, at the very least ensuring shared input into assessment and decision-making. The nature of the partnership will evolve as the two institutions evolve: "What happens is not that the donor is involved for a 7-10 year period and then withdraws, but that the relationship changes. As local resources become available, the input of

the donor relative to the rest is diminished in terms of money and professional assistance" (senior UWI officer).

Changes in the relationship will logically require changes to the nature of the support, with more specific targeting to suit the developing agenda set by the institution and better defining of goal priorities and gaps in local resources. In the case of the CGS, donor resources should give fuller emphasis to the School's outreach activities, helping it establish its identity and credibility, generate local contributions, and encourage commitment of and to locally-based social science research. Publishing, staff exchange, seminars and student on-site research and training stages will all be viable means of operationalizing such outreach. Access to donors' project and organizational networks should similarly be fostered, over the long-term and even as overall funding itself declines.

The range and type of relations with donors will vary over time. Concentrated commitment from a relatively few donors over a long period is probably necessary at the outset of an institutional development activity, to provide the focussed energy and resources critical to creativity and initiative. Such large, single-source intervention aimed solely at "establishing the institution", however, should gradually shift to more and different donors and to local contributors, distributing support across a more diverse and sustainable series of smaller components.

All of this will, in turn, require greater coordination of funding to ensure that development and programme needs are covered in a balanced, comprehensive and timely way. There is evidence that this is happening in the CGS even within current donor arrangements, largely because of the School's authority for setting its programme and aligning budgets with costs. Strengthening and extending this process further will involve the School and donors regularly assessing appropriate financial categories, amounts and respective areas of concentration. Though unfortunately current CGS donors seem to continue to prefer separate negotiation, the CGS on its part should begin participating in a greater variety of broadly-aimed, system-wide support programmes, and to replace the single-source fellowships with individual and subject specific grants. Contacts currently being made with Northern universities as one-time semester attachments could be developed into more substantive and substantial linkage arrangements, allowing for in-kind staff and resource exchange, access to new networks, donor twinning support and joint research projects.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

The goal of sustainable development couches much of donor intervention these days, but it is a concept neither well defined nor, it appears, well applied. Current projects to promote durable improvements in agriculture, health, education or economics are proving little more lasting than their predecessors. This is not because their principles or mechanisms are necessarily any more flawed, but because they continue to exclude the ultimate users of the innovation as owners of the process, and to design and apply activities in isolation from the wider socio-economic, cultural and political contexts in which these activities must live, with which they must eventually accommodate and in which they must induce change if they are to persist. As long as development activity remains a "project" of intervention and fails to integrate with the people and the systems expected to use and maintain it, it will not be sustained.

*Institutional development* activities are a particular case in point. Largely restricted to the time-bound and scheduled provision of technical assistance, restructured management systems, job-skills retraining and equipment, institutional development as applied in aid projects is typically set within the framework of the western bureaucratic model of what an institution should be and how it should act, a model which has generally worked in the West because it has evolved out of, and been consistent with, that culture. It is, unfortunately, a framework which tends to acknowledge the possibility of no other arrangement of functions and mechanisms, and which tends not to recognize the critically enabling role of congruence between the institution and its setting to their success.

The basic flaw in the approach is its underlying assumption that institutions are self-standing, single-logic systems; they are not. They are instead *social* systems, made up of individuals agreeing to act together toward common, though often only vaguely articulated, purpose and according to commonly agreed values, norms, and assumptions of mutual benefit. At this micro level, the institution's members are ultimately responsible for its continuity and the realization of its purposes. It is they who must agree to co-operate, to adapt and to implement its tasks, and the institution will succeed to the extent it serves the needs of these members in ways which they could not realize through individual action. The institution provides its members the benefits of belonging and the opportunity of extending their capacities and achieving their aims in broader and more durable ways.

From the macro perspective, the institution is similarly a social entity insofar as it forms part of the wider societal system and performs specific societal functions. By assembling long-term and largely predictable resources within ascertainable goal and procedure parameters, institutions produce the goods and services of their society; are directed by that society through market and political feedback; and, in turn, influence the direction and nature of the society's values, priorities and expectations. At this level, the institution is itself the critical unit of analysis. To

succeed, it must be responsive to the various, often contending, demands of the different segments of its environment; be consistent with its culture; and be able to stimulate and accommodate changes within it.

At both micro and macro levels, at least in the ideal, institutions represent significant "value added". They provide a supportive context for individuals in which to learn, to apply their skills and knowledge, to share costs and extend benefits. They also enable the aggregation of skills, knowledge and resources, allowing a wider range of clients to be served more efficiently and consistently over the long term. And they serve as repository for key elements of the society's culture and knowledge: what it knows and how it knows it (education and information systems); its means of generating new knowledge (research systems) and of disseminating received knowledge (learning and information systems); and its mechanisms for supplying the services and products of learning (economic and social service delivery systems).

Institutions are thus intrinsically part of their social setting, and will be developed successfully and sustainably only in terms of that setting. Outside intervention may serve effectively as a catalyst for their development and as a facilitator of the process; it will never, however, compel change and will have only minimal effect on the direction and rate of its progress. Intervention will fail to the extent it does not act in full partnership with members of the institution, those finally responsible for effecting change. It will fail, too, if it does not take into account through its design, provision of resources and fostering of outreach strategies, the institution's various intersecting environments.

### Knowledge Institutions

Institutions of knowledge, such as universities, research centres or graduate schools, have particular relevance in this paradigm since, by design, they are accorded the right and the responsibility of acting as the society's means of maintaining, extending and regenerating its knowledge base. They consequently represent an especially vulnerable focus of social disequilibrium where they are weakened through declining resources, loss of status, reductions in the relevance or quality of their output, or inept attempts at institutional change.

They are also, perhaps, the most sensitive indicator of the "knowledge crisis" confronting developing countries and their institutions today, on the one hand facing the threat of enforced irrelevance through the influx of rapidly changing information and the international information systems controlling them, and on the other, pressed by the critical need to maintain currency with that information and access to those systems. The Caribbean, and the CGS within the region, are very much part of this dilemma. Tantalizingly close to the North American centre of the new information order, the Caribbean nevertheless resembles much of the Third World in its position of passive recipient: subject to receipt of largely unrequested and often contradictory information intended to direct its action, but given little opportunity to assess or interpret that information in accordance with local perspectives and priorities, to engage its disseminators in interactive communication, or to contribute its own data to the pool.

Like developing countries generally, the Caribbean confronts the issue of how to gain access to the new information networks and knowledge sets in ways which will permit it a reasonably proactive role in adapting and applying them in terms of local policy-making and development institutions, the market and the public at large. The problem is that such participation is becoming an increasingly distant prospect in the region as countries become steadily less able to provide the human and knowledge resources necessary to initiate action. At the same time, the North has already achieved critical mass in such resources, enabling it to take and to keep its lead position in determining the meaning and value of knowledge, and who is entitled to control, share and legitimately add to it. As part of the South, the Caribbean must run exceedingly hard simply to maintain a dignified presence in the field.

That it must make the effort, however, is clear. Similarly clear is the obligation on the part of knowledge institutions and donors in the North to ensure that it succeeds. On the moral grounds of social justice and equity alone, genuine development demands shared ownership of knowledge, including the right and the opportunity to produce and use it in locally appropriate ways.

On a pragmatic level, as well, the North will continue to support the unidirectional proliferation of information ultimately at its own risk, if meaningful development is really its goal. Effective communication of information, in the developmental sense, implies at least three elements: the interpretation, maintenance and application of received knowledge by both producers and receivers; the capacity of each side to generate local knowledge and evolve increasingly effective strategies for exchanging and using it; and the means of producing further generations of people and institutions with such capacities. Communication of information in this sense is obviously impossible without an active and engaged receiver; information will simply not produce sustainable change unless it is interpreted into forms and meanings which make sense to receiving communities, and until it is integrated into their existing knowledge and action systems.

### The Consortium Graduate School

Within this context, the CGS has significant potential to help redress the imbalance. As a well-considered, seriously applied and professionally sound attempt by the region to increase control over its own knowledge base, the purpose of the Consortium is not to further isolate the Caribbean within a sequestered system of solely indigenous knowledge, but rather to establish an institution capable of undertaking realistic cross-sectoral analyses of existing social science knowledge and practice; of generating and elaborating regionally relevant social science theory; of educating new academics, policy-makers and developers capable of creating, evaluating and using this theory; and of facilitating the application of all of these "products" to improved development practice. The intent is to enhance the region's *capacity to collaborate* in the equitable exchange of knowledge and in promoting its utilization; and to diminish the region's risk of being co-opted or manipulated by either the incoming information or its delivery systems.

The CGS has a number of strengths pertinent to its achieving these purposes: its basis in the context and on the human resources of the region; its determination to create a blended curriculum of international and regional content and to educate graduate students toward a broadly-focussed, multidisciplinary and development perspective; its promotion of regional research and of policy and programme linkages; and its decision to situate itself as part of the university, while continuing to maintain enough of a separate identity to allow it to innovate.

Critical also is the fact of its managing to establish a reasonable in-house institutional culture. In part, this has been possible by virtue of the still small number of people involved, of their academic quality, and of the buffer of donor resources. More significant, however, has been the continuing effort of the leadership to maintain its clarity and relevance of purpose, to renegotiate specific objectives and mechanisms in ways consistent with one another and with that overall purpose, and to engage staff and students jointly in the kind of organizational learning necessary to establishing ownership and realizing the successive approximation of its goals.

The principal weakness of the School is its continued reliance on donor support, a condition likely to persist for the foreseeable future. It is a situation which, while unavoidable, is also to a large extent reasonable. It cannot be expected that a new, and in a number of ways ideal, graduate institution be established on the basis of regional resources in a situation of critical economic decline in the region, and the concomitant diminution of its universities' resource base. Even in the North, comparatively much better off academic and research institutions are facing increasing criticism for not adequately pulling their social and economic weight, and thus of deserving reduced support from the society. Knowledge institutions in the developing societies are obviously in still greater jeopardy.

It is a situation in which institutions like the CGS must seek to achieve a delicate balance: between creating new knowledge and promoting the wider access and use of received knowledge; and between both of these and the education of a new scientific human resource base. In the past, a university might have selected its option, but such is no longer the case. Especially in the South, knowledge institutions will need to serve all three ends -- to create and manage knowledge, to educate, and to collaborate in dissemination and application. To be sustained, the CGS will need to prove its ability to produce a capable and relevant human resources base for the region in the social sciences; to interpret internationally-produced information with reference to the Caribbean context; to build a professionally stable relationship with the rest of the knowledge system.

## Intervention

A central tenet of development is the reality and the necessity of a single world community. This suggests that continuing donor support to strengthening institutions like the CGS, far from being a sign of weakness on the recipient's part, is a necessary commitment on the part of those with



resources to provide. It also suggests that this support be provided in such a way as to facilitate development rather than somehow to prescribe it; that it promote local ownership and underscore existing capacities to apply professional judgement, guide organizational learning and pursue creative adaptation. That donor interventions must ensure sufficient resources over a sufficiently long and flexible time in order that the margin of security be enough to enable risk-taking on the part of the institution, while at the same time not creating unwarranted expectations or unsustainable precedent.

Donor support must also recognize in its design and provision of resources the fact of the institution's existence within a unique context, the importance of understanding that context, and the danger of trying to strengthen one component of that system without regard to the whole. The CGS will succeed to the extent it is able to draw on well-prepared applicants and staff from a good undergraduate programme; and to the extent the region overall is able to make use of its research and graduates, to demand excellence of those products and to force them to compete for pre-eminence. Analogous to the concept of the primate city, there is risk in the CGS, as part of a complex knowledge system, becoming strong out of balance with the rest. Resources will be drawn disproportionately toward it as capacities elsewhere in the system become consequently fewer and less diverse. As the School becomes the sole provider of quality graduate education, it will tend towards greater conservatism, less innovation. And the system overall will eventually become less able to accommodate or initiate change.

Finally, donors must keep in mind that the institutional development process is directly affected by the organic character of the institution itself as a social entity. At its base, the process thus involves not the setting up of structures, but the bringing together of the goals, expectations, norms and values of individual members and clients to form a coherent whole, and of establishing mechanisms to maintain them over time as a recognizable unity. Within this construction, the development of an institution is a necessarily continuing process of maturation and adaptation; it is not one to be completed with the realization of a final format within the short-term. The CGS will evolve as it accommodates both the priorities, skills and knowledge of new members and the varying demands put on it and the resources provided to it by its overlapping environments. It will succeed in large measure to the extent these accommodations are successful.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Argyris, C. and D. Schon. *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*. Addison-Wesley Publ. Reading/London. 1978.
- Douglas, Mary. *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse University Press. Syracuse NY. 1986.
- Eaton, J.W. (ed) *Institution Building and Development: from Concepts to Application*. Sage Publ. Beverly Hills. 1972.
- Flores, P.V. *The Selective Trainer-Trainee Scheme of the IDRC*. MS Report 245e. Dec/89.
- Gomez, H. and B. Alvarez. *Building Research Institutions in Developing Countries: A Research Perspective* July 1990.
- Hage, J. and K. Finsterbusch. *Organizational Change and Development Strategy: Models and Tactics for Improving Third World Organizations*. Lynne Rienner Publ. Boulder/London. 1987.
- Hart, K. "German Idealism and Jamaican National Culture" in *Caribbean Quarterly* Vol 36 Nos 1/2 June 1990.
- Human Resource Development Institution Building. DPS Unit. Asia Branch. CIDA. March 1989.
- Issyk-Kul Forum. *Resistance to Innovation in Complex Systems*. Instituto des Ciencias del Hombre. Madrid. 1989
- Kieser, A. "Organizational, Institutional and Societal Evolution: Medieval Craft Guilds and the Genesis of Formal Organizations" *Administrative Science Quarterly* 34, 1989.
- McGregor, D. "The Human Side of Enterprise" in Chadwick Halverstock (ed) *Some Theories of Organization*. Irwin Dorsey Publications. Illinois. 1960.
- Simmons, A., C. Blackman, D. Wilson-Smillie. *Response to Challenge: A Review of the Institute for Social and Economic Research, UWI, with particular attention to the years since 1975*. Ford Foundation Funding. Sept/88.
- Simpson, D. and C. Sissons. *Entrepreneurs in Education*. Technical Study 62E. IDRC. Ottawa. 1989.
- Smith, R.T. *Report on an Assessment of the Progress made and the Future Prospects of the Consortium Graduate School of the Social Sciences*. UG and UWI. July 1988.

*IDRC Documents*

CGS-SS Project Summary - Ph I, Ph II, Ph III, Ph IV

Alvarez, B. Trip Reports: Jamaica Aug/88; Jamaica Oct/89; Jamaica Jan/91.

Bourrier, G. Trip Report: Jamaica Oct/89

*Consortium Graduate School Reports*

CGS-SS. Information and Academic Programme Brochure 1991/92.

"The Consortium" Newsletter of the CGS-SS. No 2. Jan/90.

Girvan, N. Report of Academic Year 1988/89. Aug/89

\_\_\_\_\_. Report of Academic Year 1989/90. Dec/90

\_\_\_\_\_. Report to the 8th Meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for Education. Apr/90. Port of Spain

\_\_\_\_\_. Proposal for a Five-Year Programme 1988/9 to 1992/3 prepared for IDRC Jan/88.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Rethinking Development: Out Loud" paper presented at Joint Faculty of Social Sciences/CGS/ISER Seminar Series on Rethinking Development. Oct/89.

Girvan to Greene (memo) "Consortium Graduate School Participation in CANUWI-ISP". Dec/90.

Harris, J. Director's Report 1986/7. CGS-SS.

Notes from the Ministers of Education Meeting "Standing Committee of the Ministers Responsible for Education". Apr/90. P of S.

Proposal for the Implementation of the Consortium Graduate School of the Social Sciences in the Caribbean. prepared by the Interim Committee of the Social Sciences in the Caribbean and ISER. UWI. (J.E. Greene, consultant). Sept/82.

Report on the Regional Consultation on Graduate Training in the Social Sciences. CGS-SS. UWI/UG. Port of Spain. Feb/90.

The International Development Research Centre is a public corporation created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to support technical and policy research designed to adapt science and technology to the needs of developing countries. The Centre's five program sectors are Environment and Natural Resources, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Information Sciences and Systems, and Corporate Affairs and Initiatives. The Centre's funds are provided by the Parliament of Canada; IDRC's policies, however, are set by an international Board of Governors. The Centre's headquarters are in Ottawa, Canada. Regional offices are located in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

**Head Office**

IDRC, PO Box 8500, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3H9

**Regional Office for Southeast and East Asia**

IDRC, Tanglin PO Box 101, Singapore 9124, Republic of Singapore

**Regional Office for South Asia**

IDRC, 11 Jor Bagh, New Delhi 110003, India

**Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa**

IDRC, PO Box 62084, Nairobi, Kenya

**Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa**

IDRC, PO Box 14 Orman, Giza, Cairo, Egypt

**Regional Office for Southern Africa**

IDRC, Ninth Floor Braamfontein Centre, Corner Bertha and Jorissen Streets, Braamfontein, 2001 Johannesburg, South Africa

**Regional Office for West and Central Africa**

IDRC, BP 11007, CD Annexe, Dakar, Senegal

**Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean**

IDRC, Casilla de Correos 6379, Montevideo, Uruguay

Please direct requests for information about IDRC and its activities to the IDRC office in your region.





ISBN 0-88936-639-X